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EVSTATHIA

or the

CONSTANCIE OF SVSANNA CONTAINING THE PRESER-

vation of the Godly, subversion of the wic-
ked, precepts for the aged, instructi-
ons for youth, pleasure
with profite.

R.

Penned by R. R. G.

B.

Dominus mea rupes.

Robert Roche



Printed at Oxford by Joseph Barnes, and are to
be solde in Paules church-yarde at the
signe of the Bible. 1599.

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LOAN STACK

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TO THE RIGHT VERTVOVS AND
modest Gentlewoman Mistris M. B. wife to the
Right worshipfull D. B. Esquier R. R. wi-
sheth the eternizing of her vertues, by
the daily practise of her christi-
an life.

* *



Although (right worshipfull) my longer
silence mighte iustly indite me either of
ingratitude, or forgetfulness, in Senecaes
censure the greater of the two; yet
I not great in fortunes grace, young in
yeares and not ripe in experience, was
fully resolved to trauesse the indilmet,
vntill more store of wealth, graver age,
& greater practise, might warrant me

to performe that indeu which now I can but promise in conceipt.
And in that resolution, considering the vndigested method was fit
meate for soule-mouthea Momus, and the Rhetoricall dogge, I
determined to make an beruicke of this illiterate paphlet, & com-
mit it to the fire; but yet respecting the goodnesse of the argument,
the greatnes of your vertues, and many thanke-worthy benefites
bestowed both by your selfe, and your right worshipfull husbände I
fell from this faint determination to a second and more sound reso-
lution, Phaeton-like to carry Atlas his burden, and rather to ha-
zarde a faulte in manners then incurre a blemish in nature, ra-
ther (by being to bolde) to make you the patrones of so simple a
worke, then by silence to seeme vnthankefull. And albeit in per-
forming heereof I shall rather wronge my selfe in bewraying mine
owne weaknesse, then righte your worshippe in yeelding a fit worke
unanswerable to your worth; yet my heartes hope is, that as

be christall stone illustrated by the glorious beames doth render
ome (though meane) reflex of the suns immensitie: so my selfe (ex-
posed to your benefices) may heereby make some (though small) re-
turne of your undeserved bounty. And although the treatise
come harsh and may dislike you because it came not from Perseus,
us mountaine; yet I doubt not but you will nourish it for the hill
Syons sake (a speciall object of your godly minde) from whence by
induction it is derived. The methord I confesse is the more absurd
by reason it was ordered without advice (since my coming into the
country where as the Persians used to whistle little stickes to keep
themselves from idlenesse, so my selfe to banish sloath, hane as idle
hovers busied my head and hand, to whistle out this simple exer-
cise: nothing doubting but that time will one day furnish mee with
opportunitie and practise with sufficiencie to pen a more perfect vo-
lume worthier your vertuous view. And hoping in the meane time
that you (Penelope-like in the absence of your Vlysses) will allow
of this, vouchsafe the reading, and accept in kindenes what I offer
in duety, I leave your worships to the ancient of daies, to prolonge
your life in all happines.

Your worships vnworthy, yet worthely
bounden, ROBERT ROCHE.



To the Reader.

SVS ANN A heere, walks forth the way to glory;
To shew her constancie and spotlesse fame,
If any fault, escape her faultlesse story,
The fault is mine; on me bestow the blame.
Which would her reach, before I could attaine,
Well tuned verse, or moralizing vaine.

Were shee or no; were Ioachim her Goodman;
Had Iewes in diuall law, and Sanhedrin,
To iudge of life, in stateli, Babilon;
Were Daniell hence, first knowne a Sambethin.
Were hee a childe, when hee so well presaged;
Or termed so, compared to the se aged.

Were these two seigniors heere, (base slaues to sin)
Achab and Tzidkija, in Ieremie.
Fell this before, or when full thral was in;
Or Cyrus reigne as some doe veresie.
Did all things passe, as they haue past the pen;
Or poeme-like to better liues of men.

These things I leane, to iudgement of the wise,
(Gray headed Senate of our grane diuines.)
If I should iudge, I should but preiudize,
And with erronious letters fill my lines.
It me contentes, that well I may auow,
The stories subiect, such as most allow.



To the Reader.

Expect not heere, th' invention, or the vaine,
Of Lucrece rape, write, or the curious scan,
Of Phillis friend, or famous fanny-Swaine;
Or Delias prophet, or aduised man.

My chicken feathered wings, no ympe enrich,
Pens not full sun'd, mount not so high a pitch,

Let Colin reare his flight to admiration,
And traine his lonely flocke, his pipe to follow;
Let Damons reach, out-reach all imitation;
And frame melodious hymnes, to please Apollo.
The swaine that pend this pastoral for Pan;
Thought once to end his worke, ere began.

For while I ment, to streigne these sorie noates,
Past Diapens, unto a Diapason;
There fell a chaunce within our seely coates,
Both great and suddaine; able to amaze one.
When mourning Mopsus cride, leaue of thy play,
Shift noates aside, fling pipe and all away.

Cease seely man; pull downe thy wonted pride,
Enioine thy muse to mourne, and pen to moane.
(As did Amintas, when good Phillis dide)
For thou art quite forlorne, and left alone.
Sith Thestylis, (thy Thestylis) hath left thee.
While death of greatest iewell, hath bereft thee,

For Thestylis was shee, which too'd thy springing;
Who eake allow'd thee breath, to blow thy pipe,
And idle time to whistle and be singing,
And bred thee up, till thou were waxen ripe.
Th' Elixir of thy life, in loue was shene;
Whose coine did quinte essence, thy muse and thee.

To the Reader.

Whose knight-ri'd birth, gave blazon to thy blond,
Whose godly end, doth endlesse heere abide.
Yet wanting her, thou wantest all thy good,
As doe more flockes; shee damme, and lambes beside,
Whom ioyfull Thomas hath good will to wease,
From fruitfull lawnes, unto a shorter lease.

This uncouth newes, did so my senses lame;
That though sweete Cynthia, sold me by the eare;
My musicke after went in worser frame,
And as my musicke was, such was my cheere,
My looke vnlusty; countenance abated,
Munde make content; muse weake and overmated,

Yet did I singe my sorrowes to an ende,
(An ende betakes, the longest sided day.)
And to a vertuous patroness: commends,
My homly verse, and rusticke roundelay.
Whose godly zeale, equivalent with Hanna;
Will not disdigne, to countenance Susanna.

R. R.

A 4



Coricams to the Author.

I seated late, in leasures lappe;
Had leasure to peruse,
Thy Eustling; term'd thy *Susans constancie*
And at the swelling titles
Promise, long did muse.
Which how perform'd, let others iudge (not I)
Who spent my thoughtes, to be thy warning spie;
That iudgement darst provoke, by bolde attempt,
When time from tongues, no writer doth exempt.

While deepe conceited critique wittes,
Of this our daintie time,
Doe like no birdes, but what themselves haue hatched
They loue no pleasant prose,
Are discontent with rime.
But what they please, all *Poems* else age patched,
Which humors still, with discontent are matched,
And wayward discontent, the censors bowe;
To quippe they care not whome, they care not how.

Sometimes whole heapes of idle wordes,
(They quarle) are cast away.
Sometimes the matter naked, wanteth wordes,
Sometimes good matters mar'd,
When ill contriv'd, (they say)
Sometimes the sence, a casting cause affordes.
Sometimes a sentence, or affectate wordes,
A tedious stirre: for in *Philautus* brawl,
Thers escapes not one; hee hath a bout withall.

Saith

Coricams to the Author.

Saith one of these; the note is iust,
Mongst men of better note:
Our sharpest wittes, that climbe the sceane of fame,
In vainest follies leese
Themselves, and vainely dote.
Doe spend much art, for to deserue much blame,
While they some idle-dreamed phancie frame,
And leaue their workes, a witnessle firme and stable,
V What time they lost in hatching of a fable.

Great pittie sure that learned men,
Of great and rare conceate,
Should so these braue habilities debase:
That while they stretch them out
To prooue, to shew them great;
The praise of their imploimentes in this case,
Is voide of praise; and hath this onelie grace,
That they haue wisely tolde, a foolish tale,
And smoothly set a long made lie to sale.

And yet this inconvenience great
Might finde some faire excuse,
If drift of their discourse, at vertue aymed,
For oft in fables foldes

Trimme morall truth doth vse.
But when the worke is matter meereley feigned,
And ende thereof, deserues to be disdained.
The writer merites pitié, more then praise,
And worke (vnworthy presse) fit flames to raise.

Thus surelie speakes, this *Censurer*,
And doth his thoughtes reueale,

Coricams to the Author.

(As if some sterne Dictator, thundred lawes;
From whom on paine of death,
Vnlawfull to appeale.)
Yet did not well bethinke him in his pawse?
For though a story true, doth grace his cause:
He paintes it out with colours of invention:
And giues it wordes, to fit his owne intention,

Which if the Censor vse him selfe,
Thy selfe maist vse the same.
Whose euill aymeth at as vertuous end;
And to reduce the worke,
And story into frame;
By reasons rule, the whole discourse is pend,
And hath no cause, the godly to offend,
Or gricue the good: vnlesse some harsh diuine,
Against his sacred *Poems* will repine.

An other sort of snarling mates,
Do pester eury age:
Who will be critickes, though they guide the cart.
And censure workes of weight;
Quat faultes in every page.
Depraue the wittes, of men of best desert:
And iudge of all, by envie (not by arte.)
Who more doth mallice art, then artlesse braine?
Who byteth worse then *Beuins* in his vaine?

High spirited *Homer* (matchlesse man)
A baggage, deem'd a blocke:
And did with bitter rauntes, his workes deface,
Of *Virgilles* dainetic vaine,

Could

Coricams to the Author.

Could *Mevius* frame a mocke,
Inferring that he filch'd his chiefest grace,
By treading in the tract, of *Homers* trace,
Or from the fruiter, of *Hesiods* happie braine,
And *Theocrite* the *Syracusan* swaine.

Thus to obscure the men iest crie,
Where deepe-mouth'd hounds doe go;
Each time hath bawling cures, that barke and howle:
Which sith tis so, hath bin,
And ever will be so:
Of learned rest secure, well train'd in schoole,
Thou must not feare, the flout of every foole.
Who in a prating vaine (though thou repine)
Will blame whole bookes, but cannot mend a line.

C. A. R.



An induction to the story.

WHat time the iudge severe, (sin-scourding God)
(Cōpeld to change the cōurse that mercy ment),
Withdrew his fayour, and drew forth his rod,
To punish those that knew not to repent:
That time ingrate-full *Inda*, iudgement had:
To die or suffer bondage (even as bad.)

For when they scornd, the heav'nly herauldes sent,
To summon them (back-sliders) to the Lord:
Crying with yernefull voice, Amend, repent,
Else hoattest wrath, will follow this his word.
Else will too late repentance plead for grace;
When mercie flies, and iustice holdes the place.

When hardned heartes, could not become so wise;
By others harmes, to learne their owne beware:
While fresh record presented to their eies,
Ten brethren tribes, subdude to slavish care;
Whom the *Affirian* monarch, did subdue;
And made of freemen borne, a captiue crue.

When eke they were vnmindefull how their king,
Younge *Ieconias*, but nine yeares before;
And thousandes moe: the sanctus blacke did sing.
(What time they did their dismall day deplore)
While captiues thence in bondage led to dwell,
They crying, weeping schreeching, say farewell.

When princes, rulers, priestes and people base,
Exceeded farre, all heathen in their sin.
When *Sodom* and *Samaria* might giue place,
And not come neere, the waies they walked in.
When harmeless men, were held of none account,
But he the man that did in sinne surmount,

Then

An induction to the story.

Then as a raging flowd, long bent with baies,
Beares headlong downe, what standes before the breach:
Or as rebellious soares, by long delaies,
Recure-lesse scorne, the cunning of the leach;
Ev'n so: remedlesse, like raging thunder, (der.)
The Lord powrd downe his wrath, long time kept vn-

When whistling for the Bees of *Babel*-land,
Came *Nabuchadnezzar* (sirnamd the great)
And brought with him a most puissant band,
Offsouldiers; skild in every war-like feate.
For as the clustring bees, in swarmes doe clinge;
So flockt the *Chaldeis*, round about their kinge.

Then *Salem* saw, a sad heart-breaking sight;
Resolved foes entrench'd about her walles,
In glittring armour, many a warlike wight,
Most fully bent (what ever hap befall's)
By dint of sword, to winne eternall fame;
Or pawne their liues, in purchase of the same.

But most of all this grieve the conscience gaules;
And ever mates their mindes (so overtaken,
By deepe despaire) to thinke amidst these brawles,
That God for sin, their citie had forsaken.
A matchlesse woe; if God the cause withstand,
A fearefull conscience makes a feeble hand.

Adde more to this; the seige so long doth lie,
That famine in the citie is so soare,
The people pine, consume, doe droope and die;
While horses in the field; haue forrage store.
Death in the house, destruction in the streete;
Sword in the field; distresse and daunger meete.

Amidst

An induction to the story.

Amidst these woes, the rumbling *Echoes* sound;
How dreadful drums, strike vp the fierce allarme,
And rattling trumpe, (with bloudy noates rebound)
The valiant heartes, to fell assault doth charme.
When herauld first, had summond them to yeeld,
Or to expect, a mercy-wanting field.

Then for supplie, of thundring cannon shot;
Go ram and engine, to the walles (a pace.)
The Pioneer he, bestirres him in his plot,
To make huge towers, to giue the souldier place.
On either part, their powers they fully bend,
To giue assault, and from the walles defend.

Ensignes aduance, and glory scales the fort,
The ladders then are hoysed to the walles,
And honors hope, th' assaillantes doth exhort,
To climb from whence, an other headlong falles.
While Archers shoote, from tough wel-timbred bow,
Their thirled singing shaftes, as thicke as snow.

When once the eager souldier, hath made way,
Within the walles; and might commaund the towne;
Then as a hungry Lyon for his pray;
He rangeth, rageth, killeth, knocketh downe.
Then might be seene, (like streames to make a flood)
The streetes and channels, flow with crimson blood.

The bedlem handes, do deale soorth murthring blowes,
The victor rageth restlesse, (Lyon-like)
While mercie craving vanquish'd, pleades his woes,
To him that hath no cares, but handes to strike.
The maid; the wife, is subiect to this rage;
The suckling babe and he that stoopes for age.

An induction to the story.

For as the mower, with his keene edg'd sickle,
Cuts downe aswell the greene, as seeded grasse;
Eve so the souldiers sword, (though teares downe trickle)
Permitteth not a breathing soule to passe,
He spareth none that happen in his way;
Fairst wordes, chaff lookes, entreaties, beare no sway.

Then sounded soorth, the scritchng grisly crye,
Of slaughtered soules; and many a deepe fet groane,
Of such as murthred, yeelde the ghost and die,
From wounded lungs, yeelding a hollow moane,
While manly men, that whilome stoutly stood,
Dismembred now, lie weltring in their blood.

Then might be heard, and seene with wofull eies
The living soules, lamenting for the dead;
Powring out plaintes, with sobbes with sighes and cries.
And bitter teares, as bleeding heartes might shed.
The old lament, long life to be forlorne,
The young repent, that ever they were borne.

The wife shee soundes (and yeeldes her vitall breath)
To see her husband die (in wofull case)
The husband feesles a fit, far worse then death,
To see his wife defild, before his face.
And seely babes, (poore heartes) to perish this,
That never did offence, or thought amisse.

The mourning mothers, tugge, and hale their heares,
To see their slaughtered seede, remedilesse.
The children bath their cheekes, with bloudy teares,
To see their wretched parentes, in distresse.
While help-lesse handes, doe trust vnto their feete;
And leaue poore infants, crawling in the streete.

An induction to the story.

For now the men of armes, were fled by stealth;
And every soule was left, to shift for one.
Counsaile did want; regard was none of wealth,
Of kin, or friend, or who were left alone.
Who makes not hast, death and destruction fees,
The happiest wight, doth shew the swiftest heeles.

When souldiers slaughtering sword, embrewd with blood,
Found not a man, that durst resistance make:
Then bedlorn minds, gan grow to milder moode,
(If mildnesse be as bad a course to take)
For now vnbridled lust, at large doth stray;
And prowles about, for pillage, and for pray.

Had chaste *Lucrecia*, dwelt amongst those dames,
Full many a *Tarquin*, would haue wrought his will.
Had good *Susanna*, wandred in those flames,
Her spot-lesse corpes, had bin constrain'd to ill.
While feely lambes, the chastest, and most iust,
Became a pray vnto a peysantes lust.

The matchlesse vessels, of magnificence,
The temples treasure, (many a millions mate)
The wealth, of *Zedechias* excellence,
The riches of his Lordes, and men of state:
These things were sent away to *Babylon*;
As fit for *Nabuchadnezzar* alone.

What else was left, of Jewels, gold, and plate,
Amongst the meaner sort, (which might be much)
Each souldier held, what so thereof he gate;
While they with other spoiles themselves enrich,
And when the pilfing hand, had his desire;
The rest was left, to be consum'd with fire.

An induction to the story.

Then climes the furious flame, the stately tower;
Each priueledge, dorth giue the souldier place.
The pioner spares, nor temple, house, nor bower,
The time is spent, to spoile and to deface.
There was not left one monument of fame,
Which did not feele the force of burning flame.

The Heav'n-like house, the temple of the Lord;
The worldes cie, and onely worke of name,
Whom once he did delight, but now abhord)
Is rayed downe, and robbed of that fame.
The walles also, that hem the citie round,
By might of men, are e'ned to the ground.

The feely captiues, that had scap'd the sword,
And were reserv'd as *Trophies*, of the spoile;
Hange downe their heades, and cannot speake a word,
Or found adue vnto their natiue soile.
The seruantes loath, to see the masters face,
The subiectes griene, to weigh the princes case.

Whom haplesse king, flight could not yeeld reliefe,
But as the deere, before the nimble dogge,
He was enforst, to stoope vnto his griefe;
And for a crowne, to were a heauie clogge.
What time his sonnes, once slaine before his face,
He had his eies put out, with great disgrace.

And so blinde captiue, led to *Babylon*,
To be a bondman to his dying day?
He left the royall seate, of *Salomon*,
And now must leaue commaunding, and obey.
Since he that was impyring prince before,
Is now a fellow prisoner, and no more.

An introduction to the story.

Amongst these fettred troopes, of thralld states,
You must suppose transported with the rest,
Helchia, Ioachim, and those tragicke mates,
VVhose natures, not their names are heere exprest:
Were *Susan* borne, or no, (their glories shine)
Vnknowne, it wantes a *Delius* to divine.

But *Daniell* then, past twenty yeares of age,
In *Babylon* was growne to great regard.
Offstage in court, the mighty monarches page,
Dreame secreat *Seear*, and renowned *Bard*,
VVhich knowne; I leaue both story and my skill,
Vnto your courteous censure, and goodwill.

EVSTA.



EVSTATHIA

or the

CONSTANCIE OF SVSANNA
CONTAINING THE PRESER-
vation of the Godly, subversion of the wic-
ked, precepts for the aged, instructi-
ons for youth, pleasure
with profitte.

W^Hen *Chaldean* glory, sate in whinged throane,
Of flying *Fame*; (which far and neere doth wader)
In *Asian* soile, in statelie *Babylon*,
The worldes monarch, and the earthes commander;
VVhat time no humane forces, might vvithstand her.
Then did stout *Syria* stoope, and *Egypt* bowv,
And *Iuda* bend, before her frowning brow.

Then princely peeres did ducke, and doe her ducty;
Then raisd shee in the aire, sky-kissing towers;
Then did the circled earth, admire her beauty;
Then dwelt there in her braue, and matchlesse bowers;
The hight and sovereigntie, of worldlie powers.

VVhose seife-ruld handes, did sway the scepter royall,
That kingdomes kept in awe, and subiectes loyall,

Standing this tipe, offading maiestie,
There dwelt vvithin, this state-commanding towne,
A *Iew*; (a man of passing modestie)
Helchia hight; and he of good renowne,
Right worthy (for his wit) to weare a crowne.
VVho tooke to vvife, a faire and louely dame;
VVhose godly life, gaue glory to his fame,

The constancie of Susanna.

or as the ringe (compact by curious art)
of it selfe, right seemely to the eie;
but when the *Saphire*, is his true consorte,
there doth appeare, a fuller maiesty:
her vertue so, his fame doth beautifie.
Her husband was esteem'd, among the states;
And decked with her glory, in the gates.

from which chaste roote, in time did spring a rose,
Susanna cleapt; not borne to eate her foode,
nor make dandling, that must feele no blowes.
Her parentes care, was how to teach her good,
and to invest her minde with modest mood:
Their reason, fond affection had exile;
Not bent to make an idoll, of their childe,

sometimes the godly mother (matron-like,)
With rod in hand, to keepe her babe in awe;
With settled looke, and grace demure and meeke,
Would teach her childe, the precepts of the law;
and make her imitate, what so shee saw,
In comely iesture, seemely gate, and guise,
That vs might manners make and doctrine wise.

and as sweete *April* showers, make *Flora* flourish;
so her kinde father (carefull for his ioy)
With choice preceptes, doth vertue feed, and nourish:
That grace might freely grow, without annoy,
And natures weedes, keepe vnder and destroy.
Whereby it came to passe; at bed, and bord,
There past no ill-spent time, or idle word.

And

The constancie of Susanna.

And carefull man, he led by meere remorse,
When booke had rest, and needle leaue to play;
Doth entertaine her thoughts, with some discourse,
From *Adams* age; vntill that present day,
And oft recountes, *Ierusalem*s decay.
Whilst eke by cunning art, *chorographie*,
He doth present, the citie to her eie.

These lines (saith he) describe it triplewald,
Aleph, the plot, where stood the temple great.
Beth, *Sion* castle, (*Dauids* citie cald)
Guimell, the *Senate* house, and iudgement seate,
Daleth the marker place. He *Muthkad* streate.
And so by letters, of her *Alphabet*,
He pointeth out, where every place was set.

And streete by streete, recounteth till he came,
To say heere stood my, there he (speechlesse then)
Could not pronounce (*my house*) teares stopt the fame,
Whilst from his hand, he flings he pointing pen,
And falling from his matter, vnto men;
He curseth both the auctors, and the sin,
The breeders of the bondage, he is in.

For while (sweete *Sus*) saith he we feard the Lord,
And did his lawes, and sacred hestes obey;
So long he was our shield, our speare, our sword,
Our castle, fort, and bulwarke day by day,
Philistin, *Ammon*, *Egypt*, beare no sway.
Not *Assur*, nor fell *Syrian* with his bandes,
Or sun-burnt *Ethiop*, could subdue our landes.

The constancie of Susanna.

But vvhhen our rulers all, vvere out of rule;
V Vhen prince, and priestes, and people, everychone,
V Vere irreligious (like the lust-led *Mule*)
Pleased in sin, and vile pollution;
Then kindled vvrath; then vvas our vvoce begon,
Then did he giue vs over, for a pray;
In *Chaldean* noates to *sol*, *fe*, weale avway.

Yet though he hath vs bruz'd, vve are not broken,
Or left as out-castes in the eies of men;
Sith by his spirit-taught prophets, he hath spoken,
That at the end, of threescore yeares and ten,
Our seed shall sit, in *Sion* gates age'n.
Thy selfe but young maist liue to see the day;
Our stooping age, hath hopelesse natures nay.

Meane time, liue mindefull of thy latter end,
Thou maist die young: once old canst not liue long,
Content thy selfe in state that God doth send,
In svveetest ioies expect some sorver among,
The vvorldes svveete smiles, are as the *Syrens* song.
And humane pomp, is as a vvhirling blast;
Soone gone, and faunce recall, vvhhen once tis past.

Yea man himselfe, is as a raine-bred bubble;
V Vhose shape though it be like, & *Hemisphere* sky;
Yet if a vvindy blast, the vvate trouble,
It doth reuert, to vvater by and by,
And leaues alone, the vaine-beholding eie.
Such is *Susanna* deere, thy present state,
A shade, a dreame, a vvriting vvanting date.

The constancie of Susanna.

Learn then svveete soule, to loath things pleasing vaine,
Learn then to loue, thy soules long lasting health,
Learn then to knowv thy God, and him to gaine.
V Vhich vvell thou maist, if first thou knowv thy selfe,
(V Vhich is indeede, more peere-lesse far then pelfe)
Seeme lesse to none, then to thine ovvne conceipt,
Selfe-loue (a servile foe) on fooles doth vvaite.

Embrace Gods promises, hold fast thy hope,
Measure thy life, by line of sacred law,
Containe thine actions all, vvithin this scope,
Be not secure: but standing stand in avve,
Least thine affections, thy zeale vvith-drawv.
And still (svveete loving lamb) in age and youth,
V Vith stedfast constancie, professe the truth.

Yield vs thy parentes, ay a lovvly hearr,
In guerdon of the loue vve beare to thee,
Offend not friendes, let betters have their part,
Be carefull of thy name, as of thine eie,
Let loue of fame, prevent all infamie.
Ill company avoide (as from the divell)
If thou vvilt free thy life, and actes from evill.

Remember (vvench) thou readest in thy booke,
Tvvvo thinges; the ornamentes of mayden head:
To have a shamefast eie, and sober looke,
And other tvvo (if that thou hap to vvied)
Good name, and chastitie, to bring to bed.
Assure thy selfe, the owner of these fower,
Is godly faire, and hath a vvorthy dowver.

The constancie of Susanna.

Delight not (childe) in braute and rich aray;
To prune thy selfe, as if thou were imprented.
Bescemely, not a flur: be graue, not gay,
With cleanly comelinesse, be still contented.
Be not fond sicke, with fashions new invented.
For, tis but superfluitie of pride,
To haue a fashon-coyner, for thy guide.

Excessive neatnesse, is a badge of euill,
An antsigne, of a light vnstable head,
An angling hooke, and engine for the diuell,
To catch such fooles, as are by fancie lead,
A moath that fretteth, till thy wealth be dead.
VVhile backe doth make, the belly to be sterved;
VVhich matrons eie should see to be preserved.

Then is shee cald, a hufwife, (comely dame)
(Whilft cleanly fine, is voide of curious partes)
Then which in time, was not a better name.
VVhen golden world, did want prides painting artes,
VVhen plaine content, posselt the country heartes:
VVhen hospitalitie did feele no lacke,
And was not climbe, from table to the backe,

If that thy neighbours doe possesse good name,
Doe thou not envie, at their worldly blisse.
Nor be thou light, to credite every fame,
Reportes doe often hit, and often misse,
Of all things iudge the best, for best it is.
VVith sober looke be courteous vnto all,
VVith few familiar be, or none at all,

Hide

The constancie of Susanna.

Hide not a wanton heart; with modest eie,
Say not thy Psalter, in the diuelles booke.
Take heede beware of such hypocrisie,
(He is no saint, that saintinesse forsooke).
Be more severe in life, then in thy looke.
And when thine cares haue heard what other say;
Allow thy tongue a bridle and a stay.

Learne good things, with good vwill; instruct the weak,
Comfort the comfortlesse, in their distresse,
Stop not thine eare, when pining poore doth speake,
Hate with thine heart, sin-breeding idlenesse,
Let thrifty minde, be free from all excesse,
Crave not too much; if riches once arise,
Obserue a meane, and let inough suffice.

And if thou covet, honest exercise,
Then read good bookes, such as our Rabbies pen,
Or vse such dames, as well can matronise,
With honest mirth, amongst the godly men,
With due regard, of seemely where and when.
And to conclude; where so thou hap to dwell;
Loue thou thine house, as snail doth loue the shell.

Thus did *Helchia*, (painefull father) teach,
His *Susan* deere; sweete obiekt of his eie;
Her mother daily, ceased not to preach,
The like preceptes, of grace, and modestie,
And oft would heere, how well shee would reple.
What time her heart, reioiced for to see,
So watty answers, with like guise agree.

VVhile

The constancie of Susanna.

VVhile shape did hold; *Symmetricall* estate;
(Her manners mated vvith a gallant grace)
Her beauty, feature fine did emulate,
VVith speech composed, and vvith sober pace.
And this decorum sitting in her face;
The whole and partes, resembled and were like
To perfect numbers, in *Arithmetike*,

And shee thus trained, from her tender yeares,
Became in time to reape her iust renowne:
In all respects, so far surpass her peeres,
Of equall age, and vvealth within the towne,
That every vvay, her praises put them downe.
Whilst wantons bent, to play, and idle pleasure;
Shee train'd her thoughtes, to seeke eternall treasure.

Whereby it came to passe, that envie fell,
Pursuing vertue, with great eagernesle;
When they could not come neere, began to swell,
And with fine tauntes to make her praises lesse.
Some said, the mayd, would proue a propheteesse,
The booke-wife vvench, will yeeld a deepe divine,
Or of a saint, will hardly make a shrine,

But godly graue, that best doth iudge and say,
Did deeme her right, a worke of rare perfection:
A peerelesse peece, to be a princeesse pray,
One *Angel-like*; a vessell of election,
Whose shining fame was free from deathes infection,
Though her time-fading beavty, dead doth lie;
Which did surmount each feature scene with eie.

Why,

The constancie of Susanna.

Why didst thou beauty fade? vvhy didst thou vvither?
O budding Rose, vvhy didst thou ever blast?
Why didst thou proue vnconstant, as a feather,
In her whose constancie did stand so fast?
Sure, twas to teach vs nothing heere doth last.
For else thou wouldst haue liv'd, with *Susans* name;
And as a handmaide, waited on her fame.

Whose shape splendiferous vvvas, in each mans sight,
Whose looke gaue argument of sober grace,
Whose eies (two twinkling starres) nev'r proved light,
Whose silent tongue knew well, fit words to place,
Whose faith so firme, that nothing could deface.
Though two great seniors sought, to blot her brow;
And to their lure, to make her chaste soule bow.

O that such peerelesse splendor, should haue wrong;
And be entised, vnto lawlesse lust.
Not *Iuda*, but false *Iudas* doe long,
Pure chastitie, to cast into the dult,
But leaving heere, those matters vndiscust.
You heard her life, first wained from the lappe,
Now doth ensue, the processe of her happe.

When trust-lesse time, by his swift-footed pages,
(Cleap'd; minute, hower, day, weeke, the month & yeare)
Had brought her past, her two first sevens of ages,
And set her in th' ascendant, of her sphere;
And nature now gaue summons, to draw neere.
In nuptiall court, to yeeld expected homage,
Since that in bar, shee could not pleade her nonage.

Then

The constancie of Susanna.

Then scruple-finding, stickler vnto strife,
Propones her bashfull thoughtes, this bold discourse;
Twixt barren mayden-head, and bearing wife,
VVhich of these two did stand, in greatelt force,
For with the best, shee ment to shape her course:
Whilst in pute conscience court, where her soule fate,
Her pleading thoughtes, it argue and debate,

Like *Hebrew* disputantes that had bin trained,
In *Moses* schoole; (at some *Gamaliels* feete)
And were not yet to christian lore reclaimed,
Sometimes they argue, mariage is most meete,
Sometimes (*e contra*) spider-sucke the sweete.
VVhile sotted fencens, are so *Iew*-beguiled,
To deeme the mariage bed, a thing defiled.

At her heartes bar, these silent virgin pleaders,
VVith soaring high conceites, as highly rated;
Far fet their petegree, from stately leaders.
Pure *Angell* spirities; virgins (ere man) created,
VVhose actiue life, no *Angell* ever mated.
While victory of virgins, doth excell,
Which vanquish their owne flesh wherein they dwell.

Each other iarre not long suspended hanges;
An hower, a day, a yeare, doth stint the strife,
Blud; died martyrs, soone do passe their panges.
But this fell battle dureth, during life.
Heere daily striving; victory not rise.
So matchlesse is, by antique rare discent,
The mayden life, and glorious vanquishment.

Yea

The constancie of Susanna.

Yea auncient *Adam*, (*Iohvæs* protoplast)
Was moulded of his mother, mayden birth.
And old dame *Evah*, to commend the chaste;
Of virgin rib, was fram'd a mayden birth.
Iust *Habelliv*'d, vn marryed heere on earth.
Melchisedech also (our *Rabbins* tell)
Did virgin, preist, and kinge in *Salem* dwell.

The wonder-working prophettes, most offame,
The *Thesbite*, and the *Abel Mechoite*,
(The one transumpt to heav'n in fiery flame)
Do shew how god, doth virgin life delight.
Fore-seeing *Esay*, where hee doth endite,
Messias birth, a maydens son doth make him,
And sure I am, his ayme doth not mistake him.

The thinge wee prayse, is mynion to this kinge.
The iustice, which the iustest iudge, approveth.
Vowd to the Lord, a secret, holy, thinge.
Sacred to God, as such a state beehoveth.
And for bycause, her contrary shee loveth.
Shee alwayes maryed lives, a spowd wife,
Yet evermore a mayd, in single life.

Whose life is termd, the *Angels* imitation.
And therefore is hir figure, *Angel* faced.
Shee mowntes to heaven, by winges of contemplation;
And therefore is shee paynted, stately pased.
And for bycause, like *Goddesse* shee is graced.
Her traine is trod, with troopes of vertues nighnesse;
Like maydes of honor, neere a princeesse highnesse.

VVhos

The constancie of Susanna.

VVhose robes (the spotlesse flesh integritie)
Do emulate, the white spot *Ermelin*.
A trophie of vice-quelling victorie,
The brannching palme, hir fingers claspeth in.
The wimple that shee weareth on hir chin.
An ant-signe is, of bashfull modestie.
Her humble minde, declares her stooping eie.

The *Gentiles* hence, in their high observations,
Compare chaste *Pallas*, Goddesse in their heaven,
To yeeld true maiden life due commendations)
Vnto the full, and misticke number seven)
Compacted of two numbers, od and eaven,
Th' entire and incorrupted vnitie)
VVith six the secrete of virginitie.

For what content, but in the maiden life.
VVhose fleet, wingd thoughts, are free to serve the Lord.
VVhose mal-content, if not the married wife.
Careful to please grim sir, at bed and bord.
VVith best obedience, in hir deede and word.
And so mans service is then Goddes more geason.
Thus on the virgin part, her thoughtes do reason.

And to amase her weake, and pusill minde,
In creepe through crannies of imagination.
Deformd *Ideas* formes, and phancies blinde.
Sent soorth by hir sicke fences, instigation.
Like staring greisly fendes, threatninge invasion,
Presenting to her heart, the homely iarres.
And household cares, accurring nuptiall warres.

Base

The constancie of Susanna.

Base mariage (say these bugges) is rife to all,
Braue virgin life a perle posselt of few,
The seild found *Sagda* stoane, though it bee small.
Exceedes huge rockes that make more often shew.
VVhat recknings made, of recklesse drops of dew.
Rare things are in request, and do surmount,
VVhere common, base, and vile have none account.

Perhaps some worldling, will thee woo for wealth,
And talke of love, when heart by lust is galled,
Pleades his playn-dealing, steps not in by stealth.
Vowing thy vertue, hath his heart enthralled.
When as thy beautie, sitteth their enstalled,
VVhile mucke (not modestie) hath him bewitched,
VVith honor kin, or friends, to bee enriched.

And so when causes, of his suite decay,
Lust fully gorgd, with lothsomnesse infected,
Fine beautie fled, false riches runne away,
The causes gon, for which thou were elected,
Th' effectes fall downe, and thou art then relected,
VVhat better hope, or hap may bee maintained,
Of better rightes, why mariage was ordeined,

If that thou wed, to raine flesh kindled sin,
The fault is doubled, if thou fall away.
If to increase, and multiplie thy kin,
Thou shalt for loathed pleasure, deerly pay,
VVe but report, what married folkes do say.
Childe-getting vadinge ioy, is in their creedes;
A raging toy, that rash repentance breeds.

When

The constancie of Susanna.

VWhen once the fruitfull wombe, hath seede conceived,
The altred woman, seemes not what shee vvas;
But growes vnweildy, groning and agriued,
As one surcharged, with some weighty masse.

Like *Balams* bearing *Angel-frighted Asse*;
No sence, no signe, no pulse, no part, no passion,
But that it feels some perfect alteration.

Some giddy vapour, doth infest her braines,
And with his foggy mistling dims her sight.
Inflates the secret Artires, and the vaines,
Dies dusky coloured, what before was bright,
Each seemely part, lesse seemely shewes in sight.

While heart (poore heart) forefeeling passions great,
With frighted panting pulse, doth thumpe and beate.

The pretie Ivory hilles (the maiden pappes)
Powt now with paine, to feele chaste fleish defiled.
The nibled teates, that perch vpon their toppes;
Yeeld mayden blush, to see themselues beguiled,
Their freedome fled, their liberties exiled,
Must now be tugging stockes, for tootlesse chaps,
And subiectes liue, to myriads of mishaps.

Chast loines by lawlesse lust; are martyred,
The brest doth feele, short breathing sympathies,
The bowels by defect, are tortured.
In weakned backe, do crickes and crampes arise.
What swellings feele the feete, the legges, the thighes?
While seemely wast (that all the members graced)
By strouting wombe, is stretched and defaced.

Yea

The constancie of Susanna.

Yea vwhere sound appetite, did hold his seate,
There sicke abhorfulnesse, hath built his bower.
Fond lust doth long, for sundry sortes of meate.
Sometimes it loathes the sweete, and likes the sower;
And oft vile things, with eagernesse devour.

Or else is subiect, to such qualmes and fits,
As doe deprive the sence, and dull the wits.

And thus the body, by a bodies breeding,
Becomes discrated, plethorique, oppressed,
Faintes in his faculties, erres in his feeding,
Fluds of defectes, beare downe poore health distressed,
VWhich dangers with more danger are redressed.

VWhile nature these, (and many mo presages)
Appointed hath, birshes, hand attending pages.

And yet perhaps, conceived hath this wife,
No perfect birth, but some vnperfect thing.
A *Mole* (deformed lump that wanteth life)
Which direfull death, remedilesse doth bring,
Or during life, doth yeeld a deadly wring.
Again if womb, be subiect to abhorsion,
Best hope is bankrupt, by the same extortion.

Yea vwhen fine mettall, hath deformed mould,
Or makes a fault, in little or too much;
Or is not of the kindred, that it should,
Then nature in true working, keepes not tuch,
But frames the seely creature, to be such.
As vvas the mowld; the mettall, or the minde;
A *minotaur*, a mongrell out of kinde.

C

VVh

The constancie of Susanna.

Why should we name, the deadly panges and throwes,
Heart-pinching paines, companions of the birth?
The sowning fits, the weale-awayes and woes,
The broken sleepes, sad dreames depriving mirth,
The little ease, when once the infant stirth,
Whom seeming'y, paine suffering mother fees,
To tear her tender sides, with thumping heeles.

Let silence have, the nightly paines in nourlinge,
The cradles rockes, the wrayling bawling cries.
The dayly chardge, in buying, and disbursing,
To bringe it vp, and yeeld his want supplies.
The hastned age, the breeding bodie buies,
With millions moe, of household cares and strife,
That do attend, the happiest maryed wife.

But if to cloake, their folly with devises,
They set the gaine of fruit, against this thorne,
They buy bad wares, at to excessive prices.
For if the climbinge weed, pull downe the corne,
The parentes with such seed, had not bin borne.
And equall greife, doth dim (hearts lamp) the eie,
To see the bad to live, or good to die.

Of which sayre bitter sweets, toyle borne, and bred
The husbandes part, ofte standeth in conceipt.
When lawlesse lust, polluteth lawfull bed,
The fathers picture, proues a counterfeite.
Some times discent, is patched by deceit,
When cradle rockes a chaunglinge soysted in,
Defeates true heire, defraudes the lawfull kin.

But

The constancie of Susanna.

But deeme the best, and cownter them all their owne
Vn had, they ar not theirs, when they would have them,
And once possesse, their tute then is knowne,
Not theirs, but his, the mightie Gods that gave them.
VWhich can in youth, or age, or wombe ingrave them.
Thus is the child wifes choyce, perplext and sad,
And better hope, in husband is not had.

Hast thou a pheere, whose faith exceedeth farre?
If him the mighty monarch, doth commaund,
To prove his martiall armes, in feates of warre,
Midst troopes of bedlem foes, in forreigne land:
How comfortlesse, wil thy poore comfort stand,
VWhile carfull thoughtes, will cause thy hart to morne,
Till ioyfull eie enioy his safe returne.

But if thy wedded mate, bee wedlocke breaker,
How much doth matchlesse greife torment thy minde,
If that hee bee a churle, and cursed speaker,
It killes kinde heart to see him so vnkinde,
Again is hee to ielous lore enclind?
VWhat toyle to tie free actions of thy bed,
To fond survey, of his sulpitious head.

If he be good, what fearefull thought to leaue him?
If he be bad, what cunning to reclaime him?
If he be kinde, it grieues thy heart to grieue him?
If he be fierce, what wisdom to refraine him?
If he be lost, what pollicie to gaine him?
If he be loathsome, tis thy taske to loue him;
And no redresse, til death from thee remoue him.

C a

But

The constancie of Susanna.

But our fond thoughtes saith shee, vvhy do you reason,
Gainst God, my conscience, and the common weale?
Dread heresie, if that you dread not treason.
Be not blind *Essees*; nor so badly deale,
To beate downe mariage, with a virgins veale.
Which were to be inurious, to my birth,
And leaue no man, to tread the trampled earth.

You partiall p~~ro~~uders, in affections cause;
Crowd impes, that doe conspire, nurlt natures end.
You violaters, of Gods first made lawes,
You secta~~ry~~, you fors to mans most friend,
Nice, coy, vnkinde, to country and to kind.
Wast common-weales; and spend your wits in woiing,
Loues lost; the churches downefull; mans vndoing.

VVhilst vnder-mining mariage, with your lore,
You kill the roote, whence all your good began.
The wedded life, of mankinde is the more,
Take mariage from the earth, and vvhere is man?
Man ceasing to haue being; what comes than?
Your owne decay; your death by his decrease,
For when the roote doth rot, the sap doth cease.

As if your earthly being, were too base,
V Vith trustlesse vvinges, you fore beyond the son.
To draw discent, from ancient *Angel*-race,
You spend wind-wasting wordes, and breathlesse ron.
Perdie you must come downe, vvhen all is done.
Kisse mariage hand; your ancient on the earth,
Vnlesse you will, vvith basenesse blot your birth.

The constancie of Susanna.

As vaine you vaunt of *Angelles* imitation,
Angelles full numbred spirites, doe liue for aie;
But man was made, for fruitfull propagation,
Man must increase, becaute man must decay,
And to that worke, chaste wedlocke was the way.
To tame flesh treasons, and appease those iarres,
Hels rebles raise, to breede soule-slaughtering warres.

Againe, if that you hatch your single brood,
In *Evas* rib, or *Adams* quickned earth;
Like reason (if it stand with you for good)
For musickes art, like consequence in searthe;
Tubalcames hammers, making maiden mirth.
Tuball from them did frame, mayd *Harmonie*,
Sweete noates consent, hath nam'd her melodie.

What if iust *Habell* choose the virgin life?
And *Salems* king, did die a batch'ler blest?
What if *Ehas*, liv'd without a wife?
And single life, lik'd *Ehzou* best?
What if *Messias*, sucke a maiden brest?
One Autumne primrose; doth not proue the spring,
One winter swallow, doth not sommer bring.

What if some few, by gift of spe ciall grace,
(If God giue not the gift, is nought at all)
Victoriously run out, this virgin race?
Yet many mo in running tooke the fall,
Ev'n when they ment, most finely foote the Ball.
And so haue mist the goale, and to their cost,
Lament too late, things past recovery lost.

The constancie of Susanna

See some which seeme in shevv, to seeke it most,
In secret heart, proue trevants (treasure wastlers)
One seely thought, marres all the maiden boist,
Which soone betides, these great tentation tasters,
Yeatis a booke-case, pend by our great masters.

*In vaine chaste flesh a mayden name doth win,
Where yeelding thoughts haue given consent to sin.*

All are not maides, that vow they vwill not wed.
All are not virgins, that are maides esteemed;
All are not chaste, that shun the nuptiall bed.
All are not true *Dianaes*, that are deemed,
Chaste *Sara* was not single, when shee seemed.
Abused *7 hamar* wore a virgins weede,
And might haue cloak'd, false *Ammons* foule misdeede.

A droane doth sometimes in a bees place stand,
The single life, no scale of maiden head,
Some batch'lers be, but traitours in the band,
Worse foes to virgin wealth, then those that wed,
Who when the foe appeares, their force is fled;
Like *Gedeons* host (faint cowardes prone to yeeld)
Scant one of ten, is chosen for the field.

Yet quaint encomiaist-like, with wordes at wil,
You paint them out, with praises at your pleasure,
VWhile making hast, to preconize your skill,
You make the coate, before you take the measure,
And to entize, young tyrons with your treasure,
Like gold-sicke *Alcumistes*, you pamper in,
A golden tincture, on a peece of Tin,

VVhat

The constancie of Susanna

VVhat praise peculiar, to the thing you paint;
Which fits not modest mariage, more diuine?
Yet to canonize, maiden-head a saint,
You put no ods, betweene the saint and shrine,
To make a painted brow, the brighter shine,
You parasite, with praises to her face;
And causlesse clowd, dame wedlocke with disgrace;

Nay rather say; this buxome pleasing wife,
VWhile shee her toilesome fieldes, of household tilleth;
And weanes her children, to a Godly life;
In this her care, the Lordes behest fulfilleth,
Sith that shee doth the thing, his wisdom willeth;
And therefore well, may take the vpper-hand,
Offer, yvhose warrant hath not one command.

Nay rather reason, mariage preservation,
Is lawded, loved, honored, far and neere.
VVhose sacred rightes, haue solemne obseruation;
VVhose ancient priuiledge, hath not his peere,
VVhose daily fruites, are dainties held most deere.
And adde the cause, for which shee is required;
The most commodious things are most desired.

VVhat if her house, be neighbour to annoyes?
The blame be theirs, (not hers that dwelleth by them)
For if we walke, in faire, and easie waies,
That haue some noysome brambles, growing nie them,
That rent our cloathes, before we can descrie them;
The fault is not in fairenesse, or the way,
But our owne folly, or the brambles stay,

C 4

In

The constancie of Susanna.

In *Breschith* booke it resteth in record;
(Reporting Register, of mans creation)
That when great *Ihova*, by his powerfull word,
Made shapelesse man, to his owne shape and fashion:
He first gaue nuptiall rightes, for propagation:
As glorious ground-woke, where he vould begin,
That building, which his prescience labourerth in.

And did in blessing, knitt this sociall band,
Endowd vvith vvorldly empire, and earthes treasure:
Whilst purest nature, did vntained stand,
In easterne *Eden* (place of passing pleasure)
When giving *Adam* of his *Eua*: treasure;
Ioinde two in one, inseperable vnion,
To represent him, and his church communion:

Yea vvhen false man, fell to *Apostasie*,
(Misled by *Sathan*, and his owne freewill)
Had spoild himselfe, and plagu'd his progeny,
And chang'd his seas of ioyes, for foulds of ill;
The matrimoniall state, continued still.
A mithredate, to cure sins poysoned sting,
The *Bezoar* stone, that should heathes blessing bring.

For as a playster, to repell despaire,
(Paine ceasing med'cine, to an aking fore)
God promise made, that *Eve* should haue an heire,
Should bruze hell-serpents head, and make him rore;
And to repaire those ruins added more,
To faithfull *Abr'am*: when he thus professed,
That in his seede all nations should blessed.

When

The constancie of Susanna.

(VVhen eake loves hot-spur, *Lamech* over bold,
VVith one sweete fayre, could not fowle lust suffice,
But let desire go loose, and vncontrold,
And chose him mates in number to his cies,
VVhilst following age was wedded to his guise.
True wedlocke went to wracke and nature then,
Straunge mixtures, made straung monsters out of men,

Itgreived God, to see vngratfull man,
Pollute the earth, with rape and ravishment.
VVhile to sweete bayted sin, all headlong ran,
Ne would in time, become true penitent.
Hee like a champion, full of discontent,
VVith wreakful waters, did these wicked wast,
Not one preserued, but the wedded chaste.

And as it were a warning, heereto made,
VVhen nature rul'd, with law nuncupative)
How sore hee did detest, flesh-mongers trade.
(Fell traytors that do wedlocks wracke contriue)
From *Sodoms* flames, he kept chaste fower alive.
So to preserve, chaste *Saraes* bed vnspotted,
Hee plagued kings, whom beautie had bee sotted.

But in the true transcript, of Goddes owne hand,
Transplendant star, how bright doth wedlocke shine.
Hee vnderprops her empire, with command
Dyrectes her lore with lawes, as with a line.
Condemnes to death, her subiectes that decline.
And when her peace is rent, by ielous iarres,
Hee sets the way, to cease her civill warres.

And

An introduction to the story.

And vvhile her lasting glasse of glory ronnes,
He blots her foes faire brow, with fowle disgraces
But doth vouchsafe, to call her children sonnes,
Enfranchizing her fruit, with freedoms mace,
Doth nicke their counterfeite, with name of base.
As slips of sin, and fruites of basest folly,
Whose rootes, he rooteth out, as seede, vnholly.

And that fierce *Mars*, with sterne and sower aspect,
Should nothing hinder, *Venus* influence;
He *Mars* his might, doth counternaund, and checke.
But gues her power, protection and defence,
In maryed mates, to act beneuolence.
When to the Brides faire groome, for loue he spares,
Ole yeare exempt, from warres and worldly cares.

Even so the nations, led by natures light,
(Discentrilles of the soules *synterisis*)
Did patronize her peace, with good fore-sight:
And to maintaine, her princely port in blisse,
Restrain'd with lawes, wild lust that walkes amisse.
Denouncing death, or danger to her foes,
That darst, gainst their states friend, themselues appose.

Thus hath all times, and tongues, well entertained her,
Gods faithfull servant, and mans fastest friend:
And those condemn'd to shame, that haue disdeign'd her;
And (if I augure right) shall to the end,
When man in vaine, doth gainst the Lord contend?
Ne can the state, or politician misse her,
While he for his sweete *Stons* sake, doth blisse her.

VVhose

The constancie of Susanna.

VVhose company giues comfort in distresse,
Two heades at neede, yeeld more advice then one:
Two walkers in the way, may falles redresse,
Two bodies sooner warne, then post alone:
Two hands to helpe are better far then none.
How may man misse her comfort (doe her right)
To passe the lingring day, or tedious night?

Shee concord doth augment, by consanguinity,
Sometimes shee standes, the counterpawne of peace;
Shee doth enlarget loues boundes, by new affinitie:
Shee (arbitrating vmpire,) warres doth cease,
Shee still imploiest the common-wealthes, increase.
Her ympes in youth, are loues sweete pawnes and gages,
To parents staues, to stay by in their ages.

VVhose house is held, an *Academie* royall,
Heere *Faith* by doctrine, hath due exercise,
Heere *Duetie* biddes, her children to be loyall,
Heere *Patience* prest, if that extreames arise,
Heere *Loue* in liking heartes, *Hope* never dies.
Heere *Fortitude*, repelles faint feares, offence,
Heere *Mercie* doth, with many a fault dispence.

Heere *Gratitnde*, giues guerdon with good vvill,
Heere *Constancie*, doth checke false wavering *Fame*,
Heere *Humble* minde, doth take nor doe none ill,
Heere *Temp'rance* doth, fond lusts entisements tame,
Heere *Chastitie*, is guardian of good name.
Heere *Labour* (Ladies foe) doth keepe true rich,
Heere *Meane* obserues enough, and not to much.

Heere

The constancie of Susanna.

Heere doth sharpe *Logique*, proue her right with reasons,
 Heere *Grammay* traines her yimpes, in grounds of speareh,
 Heere shewes *Astronomie* the starres and seasons;
 Heere to accompt *Arithmeticke* doth teach:
 Heere *Rhetorike*, in bad causes plaies the leach.
 Heere doth *Geometrie* worke all in measure,
 Heere *Musicke* is maintaine'd, to maintaine pleasure.

Heere *Hystorie*, doth eternize her actes;
 Heere *Poetrie* paintes her never dying fame:
 Heere *Natures clerkes*, doe authorize her fates.
 Heere *Physicke* stirs, to keepe her health in frame,
 Heere *Lawiers* plead, the charter of her name.
 Heere *Sophistes* (though like newters standing mute,
 Yet) doe not dare against themselves dispute.

Heere sits *Compassion*, porter at her gate,
Prudence purveys, her plenty and her store,
 House-keeping *Care*, is steward to this state.
 Her liberall hand, is *Almner* to the poore,
Religion leades her life, directes her lore.
Good-order standeth vs her, in her hall,
Iustice controwles, if ought amisse doth fall.

Within her courtes, attendeth on her traine,
 The high, the low, the noble and the base,
 The stately monarch, and the statelesse twaine,
 Priest, prophet, patriarch and the princely race,
 The troopes of warlike gallantes, presse for place.
 All times, all tongues, all nations farre and neere,
 With duties knowledgement, are present heere.

The constancie of Susanna.

No law, no learning, science, art, nor skill,
 No craft, no cunning, knowledge, or invention,
 No state that was, or that continueth still,
 No trade, no misterie, that man can mention,
 But that it guardes her gates, with good intention,
 And when shee passeth by, with seemly greening,
 All bow the knee, and thanke her for their beeing.

Thus her al-blessinge auctor, blest her prime,
 Thus hath shee gotten glory, from her ground,
 Prioritie, from venerable time,
 High sovereigntie, with empire hath her crownd,
 All laws (their nurse and foundresse) fence her round,
 Fayce *Edens* prayse, doth grace her grovnded fame,
 Mans nature (then most pure) doth now the same.

Thus doth her high resemblannce, rowle renowne,
 Thus doth her fast coniunction, rayse regard.
 Thus doth her soveraigne promise, prayse resowne
 Thus was shee made, when all thinges else were mard.
 Thus doth *Iehove* him selfe, her greatnesse gard, (ther,
 Thus doth Gods church, (her child) comend their mo-
 Thus common weales (her wainlings) will none other,

Thus *Nature* aye ennobleth her estate.
 Thus *Reason* doth vphold, her reputation,
 Thus *Profit* doth her peerlesse estimate,
 Thus *Neede* doth tend, her princely preservation.
 Thus doth mans life maintaine her estimation.
 Thus time doth yeeld, her charters true content,
 Prescription custome practize and consent.

The constancie of Susanna.

Thus doe all times, extend her excellence,
Thus doe all tongues, extoll her rule and raigne,
Thus doe all wittes, afford her best defence.
Thus doe all states, her sacred state maintaine,
Thus doe all sortes of men, attend her traine.
Thus nations all, nobilitate her name,
Thus doe all worldly powers, advance her fame.

Thus happie shee, when all doe pleade for one;
But haplesse you, when one doth speake for all:
You might haue spred your praises and bin gone,
And not chaste marriage name, in question call,
But (slide franke gamsters) sith you venter all,
You that of others, speake the things you should not,
Must be content, to heere the wordes you would not.

If you had blotlesse made, your mistresse brow,
Before you spide the moate, in mariage cie,
You might her right, with better right arow,
Thus truth (though tyred) never went awry.
*In vaine the master findes a lumping fault,
Where be himselfe doth stumble, and go hault.*

Your clyent while thee claimes, a single gift,
Doth contradict, the law of propagation;
And with a poore pretence and feely shift,
Denies man comfort, (cause of her creation)
Flies from old *Euaes* faith, to newer fashion.
Deprives her feede, lifes blessing in the land,
Her selfe th obedience, God doth first command.

Yes

The constancie of Susanna.

Yea while fine nature, worketh in her kinde,
Deathes ruines so repaire, in lifes repricke;
(To liue for aie, in those shee leaues behinde)
Shee laboureth still, to leaue her like aloue,
And neuer die her selfe, whilst they turuiue.
You (while you crosse this kindly worke of nature)
Would liue your selues, but leaue none other creature.

And where the nations, to vphold their state,
Coherse with lawes, and shame, the single life,
Your selues (as lawlesse) lawes doe antiquate,
Set barren seet against the bearing wife.
Thus wage you warre thus stirre you endlesse strife;
Thus swaying in selfe will, your will withstandeth,
What natures biddes, and God himselfe commandeth.

And thus your life, resembleth desolation,
Your bodies graues, to burie babes vnborne,
Your vow a cord, to strangle propagation,
(Far better ill-kept vowes, weare left vnsworne)
Your thoughts fierce foes, to leaue you kin forlorne.
Your willes flat worldlings, (while you temporize)
Your tongues in wedlockes wracke, doe scandalize.

God mariage made, in commanding moode,
And what he biddes, the same we must obey;
But mayden life, commended is for good;
Where is command, commending beares small sway,
Therefore to stint this strife I boldly lay,
*If God giue grace, the single life doth well,
If not such gift, shen mariage doth excell.*

Be

The constancie of Susanna.

Be quiet then sweeter thoughtes; lets rest agreede;
Let mariage haue, deserved commendation;
Let virgins haue (that virgins are indeede)
Due praise, renowne, and sacred obseruation;
True maide, true wife, in thought and conuersation.

*Both holy in the Lord; the one as wife;
The other as a maide, in single life.*

Thus her soules fences, held a long dispute,
And sillogize their reasons *pro & con*;
While minde (the moderatour) standeth mute,
VVhat's vnresolved, to resolute vpon:
At length shee thus cōcludes, (when thoughts were gon)

*Sith God made Eve, least man should liue alone,
Shee was of man, and not Pigmaliōs stone.*

When *Fame* the light-foote (titling babe by birth)
False spie, that into secrets makes intrusion,
Tale-bearing paritour, to mone and mirth,
Foule-fleering blab, truthe traitour and confusion,
Had tane by top, the tale of her conclusion,
Shee spreads with speede, the motiue of her marying,
Pretending hast, as if there were no tarying.

Whence came to passe, that troopes of corriuals,
Like eager houndes to get a gallant pray;
Doe poast with speede, not caring what befalls,
To win the goale, and beare the price away,
They flaunt it out, in traine and rich aray.
To get the fauour, of this gracious faire;
That is so buxome, and so debonaire.

Some

The constancie of Susanna.

Some offer stately dower, some princely gifts,
Some honors hight, and to aduance her kin.
Some bare of these do sue with loue-sicke shifts,
Pawne sighes sad looks, straung vowes, they make no sin,
To sweare for-sweare, this golden fleece to win.
Each streignes his thoughts, his rivall to beguile,
VVhilst in her iowre lurks death, life in her smile.

But as the mounting Eagle, in the winde,
Disdeines to stoope and checke base flockes of flies,
Or as club griping *Heracles*, by kinde,
Doth single combate, with a dwarfe dispise,
VVhose force his manhood, doth not equalize,
So shee doth scorne, to fawne on such a friend,
VVhose faith doth soone beegin, and sooner end.

Yet as in gardens, whear all herbes do grow,
Some fragrant are, whose sweetenesse doth excell,
Though some eie-pleasing lillies trimlie shew,
VVhen as they yeeld the sent, a loathsome sinell,
So some there weare, might please her eie full well,
And by sweete vertues odor, fume her sent,
VVith grace auromaticke, and redolent.

For as, while those bright globes of rare account,
And splendant plannets, in their spheeres do ronne,
One is superior, and doth all surmount,
VVithout compare, aye glorious shininge sonne,
So in this gloabe of gallantes, theat stooode one,
VVhose neate bechavior, grace, and bounty bright,
Did dim the rest, as sonne the candle light.

D

Renown

An introduction to the story.

Renowned *Ioachim*, thou the man admired,
Both of the *Chaldees*, and the *Jewish* nation,
Thou weart of all regarded, and desired.
Greate was thie wealth, so was thie reputation;
Thy life an object, worthis contemplation.
That didst with *Tuus*, purchase thee a friend,
Each day beefore the soune, his course did end.

Thou didst not with gruffe *Crasus*, hoord thy wealth,
Thou weart with *Cas* rich, when once contented.
Thou hatedst *Cesars* pride, which was the pelfe,
That causd his death, which hee to late repented,
Thou hadst *Iobs* waxen heart, which still relented,
If orphanes cride, if widdowes wanted right,
If poore men said, they wear opprest by might,

Thou weart a *Moses* in maintayning lawes.
Thou didst seil *Pharaos*, government detest.
Thou with the *Machies*, in thy countries cause,
Wouldst pawne that heart, that harbord in thy brest.
Thou ever heldst *Manasses* wayes, vnblest.
Thou weart a politician, graue and wise,
Yet free from that flie tricke, to temporize.

What heart so iudurate, that Would not yeeld,
Whear vertues puissant valor, stroue to win;
What minde so obstinate, to take the feild,
Gainst those fine partes, whose matches scant have bin
Sure causelesse to reiect him, & weare foule sin.
Whearfore her thoughtes, well trayned in their good,
Do entertaine his suite, with grations moode,

For

The constancie of Susanna

For as a *Diamond* rich, (through vertue rare)
To it the gods of sturdie Steele doth draw:
And as the youth-worne *lett*, by like compare,
Bestowes his power attrative on the straw,
So sweete *Susanna*, not compeld by awe,
But led to love, by like heartes *Sympathie*,
Did yeeld his cares, his wished heartes reple.

VVho thought him selfe to bee the happiest wight,
VVhen shee became (not hers but) his desired,
VVhen shee had made surrender of her right,
The ioy, the comfort, which his heart required,
VVhile to obtaine that pray hee more aspired,
Then conquer'ng *Alexander*, to subdue,
A world far wider, then the world hee knew.

O peerelesse purchase fownd by few or none.
O pleasant conquest, pleased conqueror,
VVhilst true content, triumpheth in loues throane,
More rightly rich, then *Asiaes* emperor,
The price was vertue, thou the vanquishor.
For in thy pris'ner, with a princely port,
Residinge vertues, held their royall court.

VVithin the closet, of whose cloyest pleasure,
(Near cabbonet for vertues sweete repose)
Nature and *Grace*, had hid their finest treasure,
And left it all to *Constancies*, dispose.
(A trustie guardian, for such goodes as those)
Amongst which glorious graces, in her brest,
Bright *Chastitie* was seen, about the rest,

D 2

Shee

The constancie of Susanna.

Shee seated in a seate which vertue placeth,
A royall throne (the soule and minde diuine)
As onely grace, that every vertue graceth,
Is canopied with *Faith* (most pure and fine)
Like *milke-way*, with circling *Cristalline*.
And at her knees, aie kneele, (and parte not thence)
Transparent puritie, and (Gods gifte) *Continence*.

And to vphold her high, and heau'nly state,
Shee hath for guard, attending on her traine,
Sobriety (truthes friend; and vices hate)
Fore-sight (that euill occasions doth refraine)
Dumbe *tongue*, dead *heart*, blinde *eye*, deafe *ear*, sad *braine*.
Well guided thoughts; a hand and foote not idle;
Sterne abstinence, that head-strong lust doth bridle.

O *chastitie* (thou beautie of the minde)
Vnspotted *puritie* in things vnpure,
The comliest ornament of woman kinde;
Were not this seate most slippry and vnure,
Thou wouldst in all and not in few indure.
But thy light foes, false title, of true pleasure,
Thee loathed makes, her loved out of measure.

Yea since thy friends in shew, but foes in deede,
Vaine Tutors taught, their pupils how to spell,
For *caste*, *came*; and to serue fowle neede,
If chastyly want, that cloasly doth doe well;
This moriue made, some subiects to rebell,
Who by pretence, to vnderprop thy crowne,
In secret make assautes, to pull thee downe.

Whose

The constancie of Susanna.

VVhose prowd *Essenian* high-priest, *Rabben*,
To canonize thy saint, wil kisse thy shrine.
Yet not with *Aaron* choose chaste *El saba*,
But like that *Leuite* vse his concubine,
Yea if thou dost thy selfe, in marriage ioine,
They blesse thy name, as sacred one of seven,
Yet ban thine act, as most vnworthy heaven.

O neighing lades, fast friendes to infamie,
Nurses to naughtinesse, lewd bawdes to lust,
Base vassalles, to your willes *Apostasie*,
Why doth not *Conscience*, checke your deedes vnjust?
VVhy doth not sad *Dispaire*, drowne in distrust,
Those temptors of these sacred *Nymphes* to sin?
VVhom rape may not enforce, nor flattery win.

Delight some flowers, doe quickly fall and fade,
And budding beauty blasteth, in small space;
But constant *Chast*, thy sonne goes not to glade,
No age nor eating time, can thee deface,
VVhile vertue thee, thou vertue, dost embrace,
Thou gracest *Susan*, having thee in hold,
As richest lemmes, doe grace the finest gold.

Her *Amber* tresses, made a seemely shew;
Her milke-white skin, adorned natures skill,
Yet all did vanish, as the liquid dew,
VVhile *Chastitie* remains eternall still,
VVhy then are vvomen vvadded to vaine vvill?
That for a wanton momentanie pleasure,
They (wilful) vvaist an everlasting treasure.

D.

The constancie of Susanna.

Had *Susan* bin, of their vnsstable minde,
To sel eternitie to get a toy;
Shee had not left such noted fame behind.
But had bin titled, faith-lesse, fondly coy,
VVhich did relinquish lust for lasting ioy.
And left her loved name, to be eternall;
But those that wrong'd the same, like fendes infernal.

For when her choice, did yeeld a vvorldes delight,
And ioyes did soare, about the reach of sorrow;
VVhen settled thoughtes, secure of worldly spight,
And barge of blisse, high fortunes seas did forrow,
Then flitting night, brought forth a doleful morrow.
What time her gracious God, did hold it best,
To blaze abroad, what harbord in her brest.

For as he faithful *Abrahams* heart, did proue,
By willing offering, of his guiltlesse sonne;
And tride *Iobs* stable faith, and constant loue,
What time *Satan*, his consent had wonne,
To leaue *Iobs* health forlorne, and wealth vndone:
Even so he fitted, *Susans* constancie,
If that shee would, her pure faith falsifie.

And to complot this treason, by temptation,
False *Sathan* had, fit men, fit time, fit place;
VVas never foe so fitted for invasion,
The plot once laid he would not bate an ace,
The price was shame (her glories dim disgrace)
The meanes, the men, the time, the place, thus fitted;
Yet *Sathan* prov'd a foole, and shallow witted.

VVhile

The constancie of Susanna.

VVhile flattering time, could not her thoughts content,
Convenient place, had no convenient praie,
Though nobles sought her fames disparagement,
Yet had more noble heart, a constant naie,
A Iudges wordes, gainst iustice beare no sway.
Gray haire, (grim futors) argued youthes greene follie,
Their velt of Priest, hooe made them more, vnhollic.

Such were the wightes, that would this Ladie wrong,
So were their hearts, addicted to vile actions,
That their lust-fostred thoughtes, did wholie long,
On harmelesse *Chastitie*, to raise exactions.
VVhy should stout nobles stoop to base detractions?
VVhy should such ympious ympes, haue rule of all,
Whose thoughtes are base, and bond-slaues vnto thrall.

VVoe to that place, where law is turn'd to lust,
VVoe, to that land, where rulers fall to sin.
VVoe to that state, where might doth say I must.
VVoe to the wrong'd, that seeketh right of him,
VVho forceth not of good, or right a pin.
But makes the earth, the obiekt of his cies,
Because he would, both God and heav'n despise.

Thou God which dost, sell tyrans rage detest,
VVhy suffrest thou such volues, to tyrannise?
VVhy are thy seely lamkins so opprest?
And doth not mercie in thy brest arise?
Sure thou art merciful, in this thy guise.
In giving Tyrantes time, for to repent,
And fruitfull patience, to the innocent.

D 4

The constancie of Susanna.

A rare example, of which righteous loue,
Doth in this ladies life, at large appeare;
VVhom tyrant stride, vvwhether shee vvould remoue,
Her heart from thee, (her loving Lord most deere)
But thee in thee, remaind the vanquisher;
VVhen thou didst raise, young *Daniell* in her right,
And put her shamelesse foes, to shameful flight.

For when the nuptiall rightes, had due dispatch,
And solemne lawes, fast knit the sociall band,
By writing made, attenticke of the mach.
VVhen first *Helchia*, gaue his daughters hand,
Before the states, and seniors of the land;
That yeare aduanced were, to iudgement feare,
Those hell-taught hirelings, fit for *Sathans* feate,

For while this tender lady, taught her will,
T' attend her liked loue, and Lordly mate,
The captiue *Iewes*, in troopes resorted still,
To iet in *Ioachims* courtes, and there debate,
Of meanes, to mannage their forlorne estate;
To rowse religion, and awake their law;
Borne downe by bondage, breeder of their awe,

So to erect a secret *Sanhedrin*,
They singled forth two seniors, from the best,
Graue, Aged, learned, wise, of noble kin,
For to expound the law, and rule the rest,
But they vvwhich seem'd in shew what they profest,
In prooffe were *Belials* broode; base slippes of *Caine*,
In faith false *Apostates*, men vile, and vaine,

These

The constancie of Susanna.

These long frequented, noble *Ioachims* place,
Grim fires severe, like *Aristarchus* brow,
Seem'd nothing popular; could not the grace,
To kisse the hand, or stoope the stately bow,
But (though with halting) onely well knew how,
To render right, without regard of gaine,
Which made contending troopes, attend their traine.

But modest ladie, (Ladie modestie)
Shee to a void e the presse, in this repaire,
And shun the gaze, of every glauncing eie,
VVould to her garden walke to take the aire:
A fine contrived plot and passing faire;
Hem'd in with stately walles vvwhich lik'd her vvell,
(Chast cloistred nymph, within to sweete a cell.)

And when the presse vvvas past, and coast vvvas cleere,
Vnto her home, her serled pafe shee bendes:
VVhere oft shee findes her Lord, and loving Pheere,
Conferring vvith those seniors, his good friends,
To whom (for *Ioachims* loue) good looke shee leades,
Secure of lust; shee deemd their age more stable,
Their faith more holy, thoughtes more honorable.

But in plaine-meaning trust, false treason lurkes,
Slie *Sathan* hence, gate breath to blow lustes fire.
At vvwhich their melting heartes, he softly vvorkes,
So that they take, th' impression of desire,
And so did bend, to vvhat he vvould require.
Thus vvith faire stales, he baiteth buzzardes eies,
To teach these dorrestrikes, to wantonize,

The constancie of Susanna:

The silver heares (sterne sum' hors to the graue)
Are dipt in die-pot, and vuell taught to fal,
In curled tustes, like yonkers neate and braue.
(No *Peruge* yet had *Pern* scene at al)
While withered limmes would youthes delights recal,
The spundge, the combe, the glasse, doe wait at hand,
To cleere the wrinkled skin, that age had tand.

Th' *Arabian* odors, mend a noisome fault:
Each word, each looke, each gesture smackes of art,
The limping legge begins to leape and vault.
VVhen *Cupid* shootes, where death should thrill his dart,
Old waggex excede to play the wantons parr.
And then though folly, giue them selues the fal,
Yet must sweete beauty beare the blame of al.

So things wel ment, are oftentimes mistaken,
Sometimes the harmelesse eie, doth feede offence,
Sometimes faire dutie, makes his friend forsaken;
Sometimes foule faultes, are hid by faire pretence.
So were these seniors, snared by true sence.
VVhen (burnd not by the fire, but by the light)
They were entrap'd, by that true spie, the sight.

VVhile chaff, concentricke circles of her eies,
Like sphericke sections, cut by curious art,
Reflect the wanton beames, which gainst them flies,
Backe to the darke some dungeon, of the heart,
Makes Liver loue-sicke, poysons every part.
Makes reason, and heartes passions, disagree;
Makes that which was not, what it should not be.

Fig

The constancie of Susanna.

Fie on fine beautie, that dost bane thy breeder,
Fie on false honor, that betrayst thy friend,
Fie on thee foolish feature, thou eie feeder.
Fie on vnstedfast riches, friendes vnkinde.
Fie on choice education (art thou blinde?)
Fie on fit time, alluring bawd to evil,
Fie on fit place, a broker for the diuel.

These were the traitours, that entifementes gaue,
To blinde concupiscence, and bedlem lust,
To hood winke vertue, and at reason raue,
That bids be bold, and banish faint distrust.
Pretendes the purchase good, and title iust.
Perswades it cowardile, to daunt for shame,
VVhere greater conquest winnes the greater fame.

And yet they deem'd her vertues, farre too great,
Her thoughtes too high, to stoope to base desire,
Which did not coole, but much augment the heate.
Great logges laid on, doe most encrease the fire,
Beate downe by doubtes, stout lust doth clim the higher.
When struggling streames, with strongest baires are bent,
Then flowdes doe twell, and rage most insolent.

And so while raging lust, out-reacheth reason,
(Like bended waues they surge about the bankes)
Displease their friendes, and selues, and al to please one,
Leaue law, and right, to play vnlawful pranks;
Vow great attempts, not worthy smallest thanks.
Grow carelesse, resolute in dissolution;
Bewitch'd with beauties blaze, to worke abuson.

Thus

The constancie of Susanna.

That those, which vvhilome did like *Martiall* vvightes,
VVeild *Mars* his weapons, and were manly men;
Become nice *Sybarites*, faint hearted knights,
Forake the field, to dwe in *Cupids* den,
Resigne the Eagles empire, to the wren.
Obscure *Herculean* fortitude, and fame,
By childish service, of some *Lydan* dame.

For as the fish that (of his force to stoppe)
Hight *Remora*, (much like the seelie snail)
Can stay the ship, of lostie tallest toppe,
Gainst force of oares, and furious winded saile;
So some whose fame, high fortune could not faile.
Amidst their happiest course, are forst to staie,
By lust-fed loue, or else as weake delay.

So soveraignes oft, come subiectes to their sin,
Whilst those that should not, soonst are slaues to lust,
Men what they must not, most are prone to win,
Which makes trimme vertue, dragled in the dust.
When rulers are (as yron worne vvith rust)
Consum'd with loue, then countries fall to sinne,
As heere you see these iudges doe beginne.

VVho oft were bent (by reasons *Ecstasies*)
VVith club-sift violence, and clownish force,
To breake into that princelie *Pyramis*,
And batter downe, her wel-built walles perforce,
If milde entreatie, might not moue remorse.
Or bold perswasions, blinde the eies of reason,
Or subtil teates, surprise the fort by treason.

Thus

The constancie of Susanna.

Thus oft they ment, to make a rash assault;
More oft they seeke, vile opportunitie,
And most doe mule, how they maie cloake the fault,
If mad desire, accomplished might be,
Their withered hoping hearts thinke long to see.
The fruit of their vntimelic, sprowting lust;
Th' event whereof, they held in deepe distrust.

Each daie these graybeardes, kisse the garden dore,
To see at least the shadow of their Saint,
And through the slender crannies, prie and pore,
To feede the humor that doth make them faint,
So doth her peerelesse hue their eies attaint.
That aie to gaze on her, they doe require;
As on sweete speckled *Panthers* beastes desire.

Each daie for fervent loue, of this faire goddesse,
They gad on pilgrimage, to her sweete shrine.
Each daie fowle lust, did feede in fainting bodies,
On fresh recording, of her beauties shine,
Each day they be replete, and yet doe pine.
While outward obiekt nursing inward anguish,
Abates the looke and makes the life to languish.

Thus doth delay, not lessen but increase,
The furious fittes, of their rebellions soare.
And though they would, a parlee for their peace,
Yet want they meanes, her favour to implore,
VVhich makes them wish, to be within the dore,
VVith her alone, that they might worke their vvill,
To pray or force her, to that cursed ill.

They

The constancie of Sufanna.

They wondred greatly, at each others griefe,
Yet want the skil, the secret cause to know,
Though friendly hand, be prest to yeeld reliefe,
Yet fingred pulse, cannot bewray their woe,
And shame doth blusht, such shamefull partes to shew.
While neither knowes, that either is entangled,
With that sharpe hooke, wherewith himselfe is angled.

Til time, that pend, the prologue in this play,
And did pretend, some pleasing comedy:
By stately rusling actors, did bewray,
Shee ment to staine the stage, and standers by,
VVith tragique blood, in fel *Catastrophie*.
And sending opportunitie with speede,
To fit occasion, bids them both proceede.

For on a day, vvhen *Cynthius* lampe of light,
Had with his golden beames, embolt the skie,
And (climbing from the circle-bounding sight)
Neere to the noone-steed line, vv as mounted hie,
VVhen *Nature* did on customes lore relie.
To vnder-propt her weakenesse, with repast,
That now grew faint, and feeble with long fast.

Then at kind *Ioachims* gates, these seniors part,
(VVith trustie traitours, to so true a friend)
And to their severall houses, doe revert.
But leaue in pawne, vn bodied hearts behinde.
(Nor where it liues but loues remains the minde)
They doe repose, their friend-shippe on their foe?
They leaue sweete life in gage, yet home they goe.

VVhere

The constancie of Sufanna.

VVhere lazie rest, did ransacke all their vaines,
Choice of delightes, doe breed no choice of ease,
The wayward worme, vvithin their adled braines,
Was nibbling still, nothing but one could please,
The feathered seate, doth seeme a nest of fleas,
The princely banquets, held a homely diet,
The Doricke musicke, makes the minde vnquiet.

The cookes controld, the meate not seasoned well,
The courtly waitor, seemes a cartly clowne,
The fragrant odors, yeeld a loathsome smell.
Who looketh sad, he thinkes on him doth frowne,
Who laughes out-right, doth envie his renowne.
Who wispreth in the care doth him reprove,
Who praiseth beauty, robbes him of his loue.

His loue? not shee graue ladie, first his loue,
Whose breasts did breed, youtnes sweet contétmnts wel,
Hiseies as blinde in choice, he doth reprove,
For *Ioachims* choice, all chices doth excell,
His neighbours sheepe (not his) must beare the bell.
Sweete *Susan* (none but shee) is worthy honor,
His *Debora* not worthy to waite on her,

Fond, testy, wayward, waspish, out of tune,
His giddy head, doth tossle his trencher round,
His hastie heart is fierce, doth fret, and fume,
His knife doth feeble, his passions to abound,
His restless foote, doth grate the harmelesse ground.
Each punct of time, doth seeme a lingering morrow,
The meale is short, when as the sawce is sorrow.

Therefore

The constancie of Susanna.

Therefore to seeke more ease, in pleasing place,
They pass alone, vnto the garden dore.
VVhere one of them not staide, a breathing space,
But that his corryvall, is come to shore,
VVhere never boath, (till then) did meete before.
And then to soone, for false occasion then,
Did plot the fall, of these vnfaithfull men.

For tram'd by time, each one acquaintes the other,
How beauties blaze, in *Susans* modest eie,
Had set drie lust on fire, vvhich did not smother,
(VVithin their withered breastes) but burning flie,
Like fierie dragon, in the flaming skie.
Which forst them to forget, their God their king,
And binde best hope, vnto a hopelesse thing.

They pause a space, what best to doe resolving,
Like two fierce Beares, of greedie appetite.
Devising meanes, and in their mindes revolving,
If that shee will not wrong, her *Ioachims* right,
They would enforce her then, by force and might.
Yet heere a guiltie conscience, laies a barre,
To stop this course, and their devises marre.

Saith one of them shall we commit this euill?
Shall freemen borne, be bond-slaves vnto sinne?
Shall we embrace the flesh, to kisse the Diuells
Shall we controlling vice, to vice beginne?
Shall we so famous, thus defame our kinne?
(My Lord) we must suppress, these prowd assaults,
Else shall we great ones, make the greater faultes.

The

The constancie of Susanna.

The rule by vvhich all other rules, are tried,
Must beare a true proportion, every way.
And vwant the smallest faultes, that may be spied,
So kings and seniors, that doe beare the sway,
Must liue to rule, and yet the lawes obey.
Else how should they blacke sin, rebuke and blame,
VVhen they themselues are guilty in the same?

A mole is speed'lie spied, in the face,
VVhen in the bodie blaines, are vnperceaved.
One seely misle will yeeld vs, more disgrace,
Then though the vnderling, and poore aggrieved,
VVere of al roiall vertues, quite bereaved.
For rulers are, the looking-glasse, the booke,
In which all subiects eies, doe reade and looke.

O let vs then remember, theres a God,
A God, whose searching eie, hath deepest seeing,
A God, whose providence, doth never plod,
A God, in whom we moue, and haue our being,
A God, to whom each sinne, is disagreeing.
A God, that will not winke, at this misdeede,
A God, that will inflict revendge, vwith speede.

But heere I see, a cursed fawning pleasure,
That freez' th my soule, yet burn' th my heart with lust.
That doth torment my minde, beyonde all measure,
And over-rules (me ruler) with I must.
Then tel me brother whereto both shall trust.
For my poore trembling heart, is so tormented,
That I the act (vnacted) haue repented.

E

His

The constancie of Susanna.

His sad colleague, vvho all this time gaue care,
VVith good attention, to this wavering tale,
Did seeme as though he held his counsaile deere;
But in his brest, they bred most deadly bale,
So sorrow suckt his bloud, that he lookt pale.
And staggering paus'd, what answere best to make him,
Or take advice, what course he should betake him.

At length from sin-flowing soule, (as flame from fire)
He belloweth out, hoar-breathed brutish wordes:
I must vvith speed, effect my hearts desire,
Commaunding lust, no longer pause affords,
No, though mine obiect, were ten thousand swords,
Ne can my spirit repressse, so fierce a foe,
My vvil is bent, my heart vvil haue it so.

A good physition, may his patient cure,
If he be carefull, of the vvound in season:
But carelesse, if he let it long indure,
He findes at length, not one sufficient reason,
How of a festred vlcere, he might ease one.
So if in time, I had this plague prevented,
I should haue had no time, to haue repented.

But now my wound, out-reacheth reasons skill,
It festreth inward, and so hurts my heart,
That I must bend, to my rebellious will.
(Vnlesse I wil endure, an endlesse smart)
I vvould; some *Pyschoniſſe* could vvorke by art,
Or man of God by praier obtaine the skil,
To turne my heart, from this intended ill.

The constancie of Susanna.

But twil not be; I cannot haue redresse,
Dispaire doth stop the way, to former state.
I must therefore to her, my griefes expresse,
And worke by griping might, and forced hate,
If that shee vvill not be, compassionare.
Thus I resolue, my thoughts are past relenting,
And carelesse I (my Lord) of your consenting.

Yet while sinnes griefe, would heale his foules consũption
Foorth steps the temptour, and to stop restraint,
Doth beare him vp with wings, of prowd presumption,
Biddes hope be stable, and his faith not faint;
Thy God (saith he) with mercy heeres complaint,
If thou to him, thy acted sinnes deplore,
He heales with speede, and salues thy smarting soare.

And what? thy slippe is but a veniall sinne,
Fine natures fault, (or else no fault at all)
The saved Saints themselues, haue sinners binne,
The steddiest foote, sometimes doth take a fall,
No shame to trip, but being downe to cawle.
VVhat if graue age, of wantonnesse reprove thee?
The blame be hers, whose matchles parts did moue thee,

Thus subtile *Sathan*, faines (to shift a carde)
That vice is vertue, and foule-sinne salvation:
And that condigne, our works are of reppard,
VVhen as our deeds, are vvorthy condemnation,
To build presumptuous sinnes, on Gods compassion,
He brings sinnes warnings, warrants vnto sinne,
VVhile thus to pray, his pupill doth beginne.

The constancie of Susanna.

O God (saith he) doe not behold this sin,
But if thou dost, yet doe thou not reiect vs,
For moe thy seruantes haue offenders bin,
Therefore (O Lord) doe not to shame detect vs,
Nor with thy heavy-falling hand, correct vs.
Sith we are not the first, that haue transgressed,
Thy sacred precepts, in thy lawv expressed.

Old *Adam* fell, and yet thou didst relieue him,
Thou hast forgotten, *Nobahs* drunkenesse:
Lottes sin was greater, yet thou didst forgiue him:
Thy hearts-loue *David*, *Vrie* did oppress,
And made his wife, his lustes adulteresse.
High-seated *Salomon*, (that held his throne)
Fel to fond lust, and had more faultes then one.

Al these (and moe thy seruants) left thy lawes,
Yet did thy mercies largesse pardon all:
VVhy should I then, haue longer time to pawse?
Or dread the storme, ere it begin to fall?
No, no, poore heart, I will no thoughtes fore stall.
Invent the way, to win thy choice delight,
And this my hand, shal helpe vvith maine and might.

He making might, the period of his speach,
Entreates his mate, to censure his conclusion,
Protesting that no reason, should out-reach,
Or interrupt, his seled resolution.
VVhile thus he resteth carelesse of confusion,
His partner dorth impart, his thoughtes replie,
And leades amisse, vvhat went before awry.

Seni

The constancie of Susanna.

Senior (saith he) rash is this enterprife,
Hast-making marchantes, often marre good marte,
Lettes pawse a space, our hast may prodigize,
Let first a sawning eie, to her impart,
The loue-sicke passions, of a friendly heart.
Let sighes entreate, let lookes onr loue vnfold,
Lets tempt her truth, with traitrous gobs of gold.

Lets hire some B. to boord her with perswations,
That letter hath more cunning, then the Ka.
Lets court her oft, with stately salutations,
Lets sift the secrets, of our *Caba'a*.
Lets looke in *Bresib* booke, and *Marcana*.
What hearb, what stone, what word, hath power in loue,
Lets try their force, and every vertue proue.

VVeread in bookes of pendants, and of potions,
Of figures fra'n'd, with quaint *characterismes*,
Of Mawmets made by art, to plannets motions,
Of direfull wordes, and powerfull *exorcismes*,
Of curious feates, to raise loues *paroxismes*,
If heaven will not heere, lets sue to hell,
The *Fayres* haue great force, old wiues can tell.

Lets then hunt out, some old *Hecatean* hagge,
That can eclipse the moone, and clowde the sonne:
Sweepe hillles away, and cause the grownd to wagge:
Make headlong streames, backe to their heads to ron,
Raife spirites (as *Sauin Endor* saw was done)
Worke mindes as wax, make wayward will, loues thrall,
Lets trie their skill, before we venture all.

E 3

Bur

The constancie of Susanna:

But out fond lingring leaches, to sicke loue,
VVhile you provide, your patient doth decay:
Let leasures guests, your paltry physicke proue,
Our sicknesse is impatient of delay,
Therefore (sweet Senior) let vs hast away,
Into this happiest orchard, there to hide vs,
To try what better fortune doth abide vs.

VVhich said: these dotards sneake in at the gate,
(False traitor to take in his ladies foes)
And (being in) sly foxes they debate,
VVhere best to finde fit couch, for to repose,
And shrowd themselues, from gazing eies disclose.
Till trustlesse time, might pay the hoped hire,
Their hunger-starved lust, did so desire.

And standing thus at gaze, at length they spie,
A spreading palme, (fit harbour for to feast in)
VVhose wreathed boughes, and branches clowd the sky.
This louely bower, these brothels choose to rest in.
(To neat a perch, for such night owles to nest in.)
VVhere flowring Camomill, did cloath the ground,
VVith Rose and Eglantine, enclosed round.

VVhile heere they lurke, with pleasing shrubs inshrinde,
Faile sights, fresh aire, doth yeeld them little ease.
VVhile conscience sting doth gaul, the guilty minde,
Their swelling thoughtes, doe strue like struggling seas,
No obiekt of the eie, or eare, doth please.
They dread the leaues, with wavering wil bewray the,
Or twidling birdes, with taunting tunes betray them.

The

The constancie of Susanna.

The whistling winde, amongst the trembling trees,
Doth force the head to aile, and heart to ake,
The harmlesse humming, of the toying Bees,
Doth cause the legges to quiver, hands to quake.
Least Iachim them suspect, and tardy take,
VVherefore the fearefull eie, doth loath the light,
And long to haue, sin-shrowding darkesome night.

And while they both revolve their case; (saith one)
I had a dreame, (God turne my dreame to good)
*Mee seem'd we sitting, on the iudgement throne,
Our seate fell downe, into a streame of blood;
And both we drenched in the crym sen flood.
In sleepe I stroue, and struggled (wanting breath)
To scape those waues, that did conspire our death.*

VVhich terror made my feareful flesh so tremble,
Vnneathes I could, my perfect senses finde.
Cease (quoth his mate) no more, dreames oft dissemble.
Dreames are deceites, as wavering as the winde,
They never daunt, a full resolved minde.
A fainting heart, shall never loose the pray,
VVhich (mawgre dreames) I meane to win this day.

Thus are those seniors, sold to desolation,
VVho doth not see their soules subdude to sin?
VVhilst their lust-hardned hearts, by no perswasion,
Can be recald, from what they did begin.
But bent to venture all, vn Timer to win.
Like ravening beares, bereaved of their whelpes,
They sit alone, devising many hel pes,

E 4

De

The constancie of Susanna.

Devising manie helpes, to worke their will,
To wrest or winne her, to their loathed lure:
O that such Tygers fierce, her seeke to spill,
O that such drowisie droanes, should be secure,
To creepe into a hiue, vnstain'd and pure.
To tast that *Nectar*, and *Hyblean* Honie,
That none but one could winne, for loue or monie.

O hearts much harder, then the *Adams*,
O chartes of sinne, mappes of impietic.
Are you the men, that vices should supplant?
Doe you (in shew) adore the dietie?
And seeke in secret, sinnes varietie?
O doe but thinke, there comes a iudgement daie;
Where such misdeedes, cannot be wip'd awaie.

But your hearts, harbour nought, but ravishment,
You follovv *Terens* vaine, in villanie.
You carelesse how to die, or to repent,
Do liue secure of shame, and infamie,
And thinke on nought, but oportunitie.
To perpetrate, your vicked leu'd intent,
In which already, many daies are spent.

But all daies now, are passed and expired,
In vvhich you liv'd twixt hope, and grimme dispaire
VVhen time hath brought you, vvhere you most lide
Even to that orchard, where most holosome aire,
Doth kisse the creature, which you held most faire.
Inurious time, vvhy didst thou serue her so,
VVhich never vvvas or ment to be thy foe?

VVhy

The constancie of Susanna.

VVhy didst thou seeke, t' enthral a sacred soule?
VVhy didst thou seeke to traine her vnto lust?
VVhy dost not oportunitie controule?
VVhich seekes to draine her honour in the dust?
O flattrig oportunitie vniuelt,
Fit slaue to fallie *Sathans* lewd designement,
VVhen thy compeer, fit place, yeeldes entertainment.

O God vvhy hast thou set, the ravening wolfe,
Vpon the poore, and harmelesse lamb to pray?
VVhy didst thou let her scape, (*Charibdis* gulfe,
For to (by *Scylla* rocke) be cast away?
Thou hast vpheld her, happie to this daie,
And now must light, in Lyons ravening iawes,
And plead to eares, that know no right nor lawes.

For when the sunne (neere sommer tropicke seated)
VVith bright reflected beames, did all repeate:
And westvvard from the southerne line, retreated,
Did make the foggie heart, in shade to sweate,
And croaking raven, gape and pant for heate.
Then did *Susanna*, to her vvalke repaire,
In shadowed seate, to take fresh cooling aire.

VVhere with her mates demure, (two modest maides)
Shew shrowds her selfe in shrubs, neere pleasant spring:
(Like harmelesse *Elles* the fountaine fairy *Naiads*)
VVhere waters rush, and chirping birdes doe sing,
And art with nature, fram'd a curious thing.
A stately conduit, whence sweete streames distilled,
VVhich vnderneath, a sumptuous cesterne filled.

VVhy

In

Saint introduction to the story.

In which this vertuous dame, was wont to bath her,
VVhen lawful tightes, such homage did require,
And now (to soone) induced much the rather,
Because sun-burning beames, did fry like fire,
VVherefore (shee saith) good wentches, home retire.
And bring the soape, the cloathes and things I neede,
Shut fast the dores, retorne againe with speede.

VVith due obeylance, and a bashfull smile,
They yeeld the looks, of readie seruitude,
And with officious foote, they post awhile,
Vnto the garden dores, and them occlude,
To stop each stranger out, that might intrude,
And by a posterne gate, they post away,
And yet quicke wantons, make to tedious stay.

Thus left alone (good lady voide of feare)
Shee serues her God, with solitarie muse,
Secure what birdes of rapine, roosted there,
That ment her wretch, in their sharpe clawes to bruse,
And vnprophaned bodie, to abuse.
O little doth shee know, what serpent lurke,
In traitrous place, to pray on natures worke.

Had shee *Diana* bin (as poets faine)
VVhen these *Alceons*, pried through the vwood;
Shee as *Diana* did, would them contraine,
To be transformed, in her angry moode.
Shee could not doe her glory, greater good,
But what *Alceons* seeke, to serue their vwill,
Shee little knowes, that never knew such ill.

The

The constancie of Saffiana.

The seely fish, that hooke hath never angled,
Doth seldome feare, whats hidden in the baite.
The bird that never was, with snare entangled,
Doth shun no place, for that thee feares deceite,
So carelesse shee, what currels lie at receite.
To take, entangle, wronge, her guiltlesse minde;
Doth nothing feare, shee should such treason finde.

But *Sathan* (that had smothered, long his fire)
Brings now three blazes flaming, hies apase;
To kindle bright, the brand of their desire,
With beauties praie, commodious time, and place,
Vp (saith he) beastes: faint sluggards: are you bate?
Cheere vp your sp'rits, let groaning thoughts be glad,
So faire a day, no Lordings ever had,

VVhile faultlesse shee, sits trapt by false occasion,
VVhen once her maides were gone, and all things fast;
Forthwith these lust-breath'd Lordes, made rash invasion,
To make prophane, the soule that is so chaste,
Like hunger-starved, vultures they make haste,
To get the baite, within their ravenous beakes,
To kisse those corall lips, and roseall cheakes.

And though with haste, they fall vpon the ground;
They rise againe, and headlong forth doe runne.
The fall doth say, this fact shall you confound.
Your feare is dipt in blood, and you vndone,
O leaue it of, that is so ill begonne.
But while rebellious *Sathan*, tunneth by them,
Good motions cannot enter, or come nigh them.

When

The constancie of Susanna.

VWhen shee (good lady) saw these stragling Lordes,
To presse in presence, with such heedlesse speede;
Shee wondred greatly: Ignorant vvhath wordes,
(VWhen as they came) would from their hearts proceede.
They streight vvvith circled armes, her bondage breede.
VWhile gazing eies, beholde her comely hur,
And massing mouthes, these gracelesse speeches spue.

Quoth one of them (for one did speake for boath)
Wee must, with that false heart began to faile him.
To tell the rest his guilty minde was loath,
Thinking (perhaps) dumbe shewes would most auaile him,
And shee amaz'd, with merveile what should aile him,
To greete her (helplesse captiue) with *I must*,
Did feare the fury, of the tyrant lust.

And quivering standes, as doth the harmelesse deere,
Beset with greedie cures, and eagre houndes:
Shee lookes about, and pries to finde a cleere,
To scape these *Crocodiles*, that passe their bounds,
VWhose clasped armes, doe yeeld her deadly wounds.
While shame doth tie their tongues, & make the mure,
And conscience seekes, their conquest to confute.

At warre was vvith and will, for best endevours,
Contending thoughtes, did hold a civill schisme,
As freezing fittes, preceede hoate burning fevors,
So conscience feelles, a shaking *paroxismo*,
In vaine doth reason, fight with *Rhetorisme*.
The weakling wit, constrained is to yeeld,
And bedlem lust, left owner of the field.

For

An introduction to the story.

For when hee had a tyme, him selfe bethought.
Right, shame, and feare, exiled from his heart,
And love with lust, a cruell combate fought,
And strived one, the other to converte.
Then hee began, his passions to imparte.
Yet bent to speake, and doubtfull of her nay,
Hee faintes againe and knowes not what to say.

Then (as those cheating mates in conny-catchinge,
Cogge, prate, and lie, to furnish foorth their feate)
He beates and settes, his braines a brood in hatching,
Straung sleights, to gaine this more then golden cheate,
And *Epuheme*, to coole flesh-burning heat.
At length twixt faltring hope, and faint despaire,
He fawnes, he frownes, he threatens, he speakes her faire.

Sweete ladie now (saith he) we must enioy thee.
If no or liues, will soone vn bodied be.
Consent therefore, if no, vve will destroy thee.
And say we saw one heere, embracing thee,
Nay, wee will vow by heaven, wee did thee see,
To act a adulterouse sinne, with some base slaue.
Then yeeld if thou wilt lief and honor have.

If thou demandaund, how our sin-seaf'ned hearts,
VWith out remorse can harbor this misdeed,
Then know that love, and dutie playd their partes
VWithin our brests, some better thoughts to breed.
But lust did blot, what reason still decreed.
Thy looke (fair ladie) worthie to be loved,
So bownd our hearts, they might not be removed

Thy

The constancie of Susanna

Thy stature like, the statly Cedar trees,
Thy peerlesse beautie, passing all the rest,
Thy seemely iestures, which each noate and sees,
These are the thinges, enthrall the mightiest,
And make commanding monarches, to be prest,
To fall from honor, iustice, law, and right,
And banish those, which love them, out of sight.

These are the traytors, which betray thee now,
These (like false guides) do lead vs from the Lord,
These thinges make lawfull kinges, and Lordes allow,
Things most vnlawfull, and to bee abhord,
What man (faire ladie) could not well afford,
To try, sell paines, to purchase such a loue,
Yea pains of death, and thousand perils prove,

Didst ever read, those high conceyted stories,
In which the liues, of worthy loves are writ?
If so, thou seest, the trophies of their glories,
Weare rayd on loue and how inspir'd with it,
They payne their liues, by farthest reach of wit,
To make loves name; eternall and admired,
That else to fame, had not with cost bin hired.

O then but thinke, thy Lords are more tormented,
Who dare suscepr, more perilles then them all,
And yet we know, our deedes may be repented,
Sith greater men, do take the greatest fall,
For when they slip, the Ercho is not smal,
That doth reflect their faultes, to every eare,
VVhich makes contented mindes, not climb for feare.

Had

The constancie of Susanna

Had not (the *Charmer*) beautie vs bee witched,
VVe should have held, the freedom of our state,
And have bin richly, with Gods giftes enriched,
And never feard the spite, of daring fate.
But why do we, our fortunes now relate,
VVhich may (perhapes) our rash attemptes ensue?
VVe came not now, our future state to rue.

But came out over burning hearts, to cole,
Enflamed by reflection, of thine eyes,
Let them (sweet love) be quenched in that poole,
That may thy *Ioachims* vse, and ours suffice.
But say the word, and we will meanes devise,
That thou fair dame, shalt never be suspected,
For why, our deed, to none shall be detected,

What if thy parentes be, right deere vnto thee?
Thy children deere, good *Ioachims* deerst of all?
Yet flie faint feare, this fact shall not vndo thee;
Beat down distrust, and all his thoughts appall.
For this misdeed, shall not in question call,
Thy spotlesse fame, which all men hold vnfracted,
And deeds *unknowne*, are eu'n as thoughts vnacted.

Quoth he we both, are linially descended,
From *Iuda* race kinsmen to *Zedechias*,
Thou maist sweet fair, in vs be princely frended,
Yea more, if thou wilt bend vnto our byas,
Thou maist be mother, to the great *Messias*,
And so be famosed, by royall birth,
Of absolute commander, of the earth.

Thus

The constancie of Susanna.

Thus fleshly speakes, this carnall Cabalist;
Pawninge his soules deere life, to ransom lust;
Or like a kingdome dreaming, *Talmudist*.
That in an earthly empyre, puts his trust.
For *Iudas* scepter, then lay in the dust.
And then as now, they hop'd an earthly kinge,
But to his tale, this Sophist more doth singe.

If treasure want; thou shalt haue gold at will;
Or what thy wish, or pleasing thought desireth;
If honors high; thie honor lasteth still.
While secrease, our age and state requireth.
Yea place and time, thie free consent now hireth;
Thie maides away, do winke at thine offence.
The cloased dores, will with thie fact, dispence,

If doughtes obiecte, our wordes in iest are spoken,
And that our loue is conninge deeply feigned.
Then heere by hollyest vow, (for never broken)
VVe deeply do prorest (and vnconstrained)
Our suite is loue, by true affection trayned.
Then yeeld, if no, this armes, consent shall drawe.
For needs wee must; and *need obeyes no lawe*,

Else if thou dost persist, in flat deniall,
Bee hold extreames at hand, thie doome is teemed.
Adulterie, shall breed thie death in tryall.
So shalt thou dead, an hypocrite bee deemed.
So shall thine end, bee infamous esteemed.
So shalt thou staine thie kin, and blud debase.
Defame thie pheere, and bastardize thy race.

For

The constancie of Susanna.

For we vuell knowne (graue fathers in the land)
VVil in thy trial, iudge and vvitnesse be.
By oath of two, each verdict giu'n must stand.
Our selues vwill sweare, we found embracing thee,
A beardless grooms, in foule adulterie.
Then better twere, to lue and haue good name,
Then haue thy death, sepulchred in defame.

As for our selues, we haue at large debated,
VVhat shame, what infamie, this fact may gaine.
How that we may be pointed at, and bared,
Yea more then pointed; dalie die like *Cain*,
While drowping life, is buried in disdaine
A loathsome graue, a death far worse then death,
Because the scandal, shal reuiue on earth.

Thus haue we thought, what may ensue the deede,
VVho feares what *may be*, misleth Ladies loue,
Faint hearted carpet knights, doe seldome speede,
If feare of what *may be*, doth them reprove,
No feare shall daunt my heart, or *may bee* moue.
So strongly hath desire, enchaunted me,
That I must needs, embrace mine infamie.

Sweete let vs then, feede on thy coral lippes,
If that wil not suffice, lets farther feede.
For raging lust, hath gotten bedlem whippes;
And beates our heartes, so that the wounds doe bleede,
And nought can cure them, and contentment breede,
But thine embracings, and thy bodies vse,
Which can recture the hurt, procure thy truce,

F

Be

The constancie of Susanna:

Be briefe therefore, report to vs thy minde;
If thou wilt yeeld, weele rest thy secret friendes,
If no; thou knowst what friendship thou shalt finde,
Thou knowst who so against the streame contends,
Doth strue in vaine; his health but sickely mends.
Contract thy tale, doe not at large debate,
For know; delaies are dangerous to thy state.

Shee drown'd in gulfes of griefe, to heare him charme,
Like Hobbies pray, lies quivering in their handes.
And panting so, as if shee felt the harme,
That would ensue, if shee their will vvithstandes,
For well shee sees, their shippe stickes fast in sandes.
They care not how they beare, their wind-blown sailes,
And lesse shee knowes, what counsaile best auailes.

If that shee yeeld, shee is betraide to shame,
If no, shee leaues her friends, her ioies, her life.
VVhich of these two, deserues the greater blame?
To die with shame, or lye a wicked wife,
Shee schooles her wavering thoughtes, about this strife.
Shall *Susan* doe, what most shee doth detest?
Shall Cuckowes hatch their birdes, in *Ioachims* nest?

Nay rather *Susan*, die an innocent,
And render vp, a pure life-breathing spirit.
Then make thy quiet conscience, male-content:
And purchase death, and hell, for thy demerite.
For harlots shall, no heavenly seates inherite.
And sure I am; if guiltlesse heere I die,
My *Habels* blud, for vengeance hence will crie,

VVhy

The constancie of Susanna:

VVhy then I will resigne, fond lust to these,
And fall into the handes, of God my king.
Sith far tis better, God then man to please,
For if I yeeld vnto this cursed thing,
My conscience hath, a penetrable sting,
VVhich will torment, my soule far worse then hell,
That I shall bide, more paines then tongue can tell.

The fact would aie, be written in my brow,
The blushing humor, would bewray my case.
If I should heere one say, *Adulresse thou,*
The redde would rise, and muster in my face,
As if the wordes, were ment to my disgrace.
My husbandes loving eie, in blotted booke,
VVould read my fault, imprinted in my looke,

In sleepe condemning dreames, would haunt my head,
And shamefast thoughtes, record my shamelesse follie.
The coverings, would crie out, of *Ioachims* bed,
And say faire hypocrite, thou art vnholie,
Pull downe thy plumes, and never more be iollie.
My smiling babies, would bewray their mother,
And yeeld their fires, resemblance, to some other.

Accusing conscience, ioinde with sad remorse,
VVould whip me, with remembrance of mine act.
My guiltie minde, suspicion would lenforce,
To thinke each whispring tongue, did tell my fact,
And smiling lookes, deride my credit crack.
And that each nibled lippe, did lend a mocke,
And glauncing eie, behold a gazing stocke.

F 2

Thus

The constancie of Susanna.

Thus did shee, in her secret thoughtes debate,
VVhat best to doe; before sh'would answere make.
Meane time they long, her to contaminate.
Yet wondred at her lookes, before shee spake,
VVhich Angel-like might moue them to forsake;
Their lewd intent, if ever milde remorse;
Or tender mercie, might their hard heartes force.

With hands displaid, shee lookes, vnto the skies;
And downe from thence, vpon th'aggrieved ground.
Which might moue stones to reares, if they had eies,
Herto behold, which did vvith griefe abound, (sound.
Whose heart lodg'd cares, while tongue the se words doth
And eies gush reares, true tokens of deepe sorrow,
Thus hearts from eies fell obiectes, passions borrow.

O you (quoth shee) that sway Gods *Israell*,
Repell prowde *Sathan*, vvho doth seeke your soule.
Flie, flie, for this my heart doth hate as hell,
O flie with speede, least God your sinnes controule,
Rest thus resolv'd, you never gaine this goale.
For never shalt be said, there lies that wife,
Which left her God, to liue a brothels life.

Some birdes and brutish beastes, by natures lore,
Doe flie this fact, as most abhominable.
Then are you worse then they? vvho should haue store,
Of reason, and in iudgement be most stable,
What doe you thinke, Gods booke is but a bable?
O be not beastes, though you be made of clay,
But haue regard, vnto your soules decay.

VVhat

The constancie of Susanna.

What if I (wicked) should your willes content?
What gaine you if you gaine, your whole request?
VVhy nothing worth a straw, a rush, a bent,
A small thing got, will gaine your great vntrust,
For once obtainde, youle vvish to be releast.
Yea loath the deede, your selues, and me (perhappes)
Therefore my Lordes, be rul'd flie after clappes.

One droppe of poyson, put into the cupp,
Infectes the whole, and makes it venemous.
So one bad thought, in heart once harbord vp,
Doth cause the body, to be vitious,
Then flie such thoughts, as are so poyssenous.
And let not nature, haue the vpper hand,
But seeke by grace, her ticementes to withstand.

Ist not fowle shame, for him to misse the but?
Which shutes with levi'd aime, to hit the pricke?
Then tis more shame, when states in practise put,
To winne renowne, and yet like slaues doe stick e,
At honestie, O doe but note this tricke.
First know your selues, then what you vndertake,
So you like conquerours, shall such sinnes forsake.

Do not debase your blood, by base designe,
Your place should foster worthies free from blame.
What though your branch, hath roote in *Inda* line?
You should depend, vpon deserved fame,
And not leaue all to noblenesse of name.
For nature proues, a tainture in the blood,
Where life laments, that nature is not good,

An introduction to the story.

Phie, Phie, graue Rabbies, grow to be forash,
To royst like ruffians, and exceede in sin.
Shall seafning salt, become vsfary trash?
VWhat? leese your selues that others seeke to win?
Shall faire without, be cloake to cloake to fowle within?
No, no; sith great ones, are example givers,
Seeme not to be, but be indeede, good liuers.

Let vertue be the ground worke, of your greatnesse,
Set God your guide, in conscience bower of brasse,
For glories fort, not founded is in neatenesse,
A'coursers name, doth naught besee me an asse,
Tis folly, phrensie, furie (out alas se.)
To stand a tiptoe, on the title point,
If life be loofe, and vertue out of ioint.

You aske if I haue conned, histories?
Then know I haue, both humane and diuine,
Wherein I finde, the lasting infamies,
Of such as shrowded, vnder sinnes blacke shrine,
And how these glorious men, like starres doe shine,
In glories spheere; which haue such faultes forsaken,
And vnto vertues guide, themselves betaken,

VWhat was the cause of raging *cataclysm*,
That did with gastly waues the sinfull swallow?
But beastly life, and brutish barbarisme?
VWhile *Sodome* did, chaste natures hestles vnhallo, *W*
Who, (wantons nice) in lustes delight did wallow,
God purged the polluted place, with fire,
Maderbell lust, a subiect of his ire.

When

The constancie of Susanna.

VWhen *Sichem* (*Hevite*) did perforce deflower,
Faire *Diana* (*Iacobs* dearling and delight)
Did not sin-hating heaven, at it lowre?
And raise revendge, for this abhord delphight?
Yes twas the cause, that *Iacobs* sonnes did fight.
Gainst *Hemors* sonnes, his subiectes and his towne,
All which by them, hand-smooth were beaten downe

What bloody warre, fierce wrath, and raging spoile,
Fell on the fatall tribe of *Beniamine*?
VWhat time the men of *Gibea*, did defile,
(By beaflie rape) the *Levites* concubine,
VWhich made their bretherne tribes, so sore repine;
That of the *Beniamites*, there lost their liues,
Fieue times, fieue thousand men, besides their wiues.

VWith *Sittim* plague, fell thowfandes twentie fower,
Because they gaue their liues, to luxurie.
Did *David* scape, for that he did deflower,
Vriahs wife? no sure the childe did die,
That thus was gotten, in adultery.
Yea God did sweare; the like disgrace and sword,
Should light on his, for leaving of his word,

VWhat did prowd *Paris* gaine, to gad to *Greece*,
To fet that mynion, *Menelaus* vwife?
(Fames *Phoenix*; beauties saint, a peerelesse peece)
Shee cost a kingdome large, and many a life,
Sardanapalus, living voide of strife.
Became lustes wanton; wallowed in her pleasure;
VWhich life did leese, his empire life and treasure.

F 4

The constancie of Susanna.

And well, for if the Lord in wedlocks cause,
Plague common-weales, and play the vanquisher,
When one fowle fornicator breakes his lawes,
What shall be done, to that adulterer,
The stickler of this strife, and bloody stirre?
Were he not worthy, (breeder of this brawle)
By endless death, to pine and die for all?

Your selues of late, (in practise of the law)
Gave doome of stoning death, for like offence.
And can desire, your heartes from right withdraw,
That lawlesse now, you can with laws dispence?
What brainicke humor doth your braines incence?
To deeme that fact, death worthy in an other,
Which you your selues, do foster, feed, and cover?

If speeches doe, but breath and labour leese;
If former wordes, cannot forwarne your eares;
Then yet behold, I offer on my knees,
A sacrifice of sighes, and stormie teares,
Pitty the paine, that in my looke appeares.
Let theie my wringed hands, awake remorse,
Vie favour (good my Lords) abuse not force.

Consider what you are: not base borne slaves,
But chiefe conductors, of Gods chosen sheepe.
Then as a crazed ship, that's tost with waues,
Doth let the waters, at the chinckes in creepe,
And drown'th her selfe, withall in whelming deepe.
So you the ship, wherein your subiectes saile,
Your subiectes sinke, when you beginne to faile.

There-

The constancie of Susanna.

Therefore I coniure you, by greate Iehoue,
For countries cause, for subiectes happinesse,
For your deere soules estate, no further moue
Mee poore afflicted soule heere succorlesse.
O do not seeke to drowne me, in distresse.
Least now you see, old Sodom flames descendinge.
Suppress your suite, serve God who waits amending.

But what awayles, to sownd to beastes retreyt?
Or quench the blaze, that burneth in the straw?
Though Croco diles do weepe, they meane deceit.
Though Lyons cower, they hide a hurtful paw.
So though these Lordes, be moane the teeres they saw:
Cominende her zeale, extoll her good entent,
Yet still vntamed lust, growes insolent.

The softest drops, do pierce the hardest stoanes,
Through gentle wordes, vngentle heartes will yeld.
The tenderest *zutho*, softneth toughest boanes.
Milde musick can, mad beastes allure and weild.
Then are your stubborne heades, so strongly steeld?
Or are your heartes so heard, so rough, so ferce,
That nought can enter, soften, season, pierce?

Behold the melting teeres, this ladie sheds,
Behold what grief, les harbord in her heart.
Behold what modestie, her over-spreads.
Behold how soare, the wound ynmade doth smart.
Behold her soule, repining at this parte.
Behold hart-renting sobbes, assault your eies,
Behold vp heaved handes, for mercie cries.

But

The constancie of Susanna.

But as the wilfull *Assu*, stoppes her eare;
VVhen charmers chaunting wordes, (like baits entise)
So these enchaunted adders, will not heere,
The wordes of health, or wisdomes sound aduise,
So bendedd will, is bent to winne the price.
That neither may, this ladies plaint or moane,
Make pittie pierce, their heartes more hard then stone.

For when her hearts, deepe oracles were ended;
And that they saw such resolution in her.
VVhile chaste faire, faire chastitie defended,
Gainst those who sought, with fawning wordes to win her,
As farre from hope, as though they had not seene her.
Perswaded now, faint means would marre their matter,
Her with strong hands, (weak fort) they seeke to batter.

For savage *Satyre*-like, they vvould vncouer,
VVhat bashfull nature, biddeth secreat hide.
And close as hungrie Ravens, they doe hover,
To doe that great disgrace, shee may not bide,
But when shee saw, foule lust was at full tide.
And that her lingring giles, did stay so long,
Shee cride amaine, before shee felt the wrong.

Helpe, helpe (shee saith) helpe, helpe I am vndone,
O helpe a wofull wretch, in wretched case.
At which her crie, the iunior iudge doth ronne,
And open settes, the garden dore (apase)
As if some fellon fled, out of the place.

And shee for helpe, doth not so often crie,
But they as fast, stop, keepe, the thiefe doth flie.

The

The constancie of Susanna.

The seruantes needd, with this suddaine noyes,
Of help, help, help, stop, keepe, the thief doth flie.
Ronne to the posterne gate, (maydes men and boyes)
To find the author, of this mutinie.
(The cursed cause, of that lamenting crye)
VVho staring, gazing gaping ronne aboute,
Like men amazde, to find their mistresse out.

At length they do desire, their ladie faire.
Her beautie blemished, with blubbring teeres.
(As *Phebe* mantled, with the mystic aie,
VVith watrish beames, vnto the sight appeeres)
Officious duric, bids her bannish feares.
Relate her hap and let her heart be stronge.
VVhere hands and hearts, are vowd to right her wrong.

But shes good ladie, that did deeme her groomes,
Vnequall vmpires, of her high disgrace,
Leaves her bad hap, vnto their better doomes,
And by her selfe aloane, with-drawes the place.
And beares her greif, imprented in her face.
That *Ioachims* eie might see, and seeing rew,
Her wronged faith, in her deformed hewe.

VVho when he saw his love, and his lives breath,
To quake in ev'ry parte, (as *palse* shaken)
And cheeke, and lip, to looke as pale as death.
VVhose fresh (life feeding) humour had forsaken.
Himselfe by fainting feare, is overtaken.

But when he sees, her sinkinge to the ground,
With girlding armes, he doth embrace her round,

And

The constancie of Susanna.

And sobbing wordes, through his tongue stopping teeres,
He saith, O sweete, sweete heart vnfolde thy griefe.
O speake my loue, and bannish bashfull feeres.
Heere is a hand, shall yeeld thee lardge reliefe.
VVhose hearts true tenure holdes of thee in *chelse*,
If all the world, should vow t'ware wrong'd by thee,
Yet should it not appeare, a wrong to me.

At vvhich his quickning wordes (as *Phœbus* shine
With powerfull beames, and heat vegetatiue,
Vnshrowdes the earth, from her congealed shrine,
And makes the wythering shrubbe, and grasse reuiue,
So) shee begins to spring, and seeme aliuie.
And vvith her faltring tongue (yet all a mort)
Of traitrous men, doth render true report.

And as we blame misfortunes, in their bringers,
Shee blames her maides, as fawtors of her wrong,
Shee feesles impatient fittes, and they her fingers,
That durst neglect their due returne so long,
Whose sad excuse, (permixt with teares amonge.)
To seeke the thinges, her selfe had laide amisse,
Return'd her selfe the blame, that wrong'd her blisse.

Meane time, the vnresolved seruants feare it,
VVhat spirefull ill, their lady did surprize.
And though their itching eares, did long to heare it,
Yet aking heartes, did rather *sympathize*,
Then know from whence, their passions did arise.
At length with bashfull boldnesse, and good grace,
They aske the *seniors*, of their mistrisse case.

Whose

The constancie of Susanna.

VVhose irefull eies, when first they did behold,
This giddie rowt, (to presse with speed in place)
Did first condemne their deede, as overbold.
VVhile fainting hope, did much distrust their case.
Their lustfull heartes, did murthring thoughtes embrace,
For bashfull nature, once to boldnesse bent,
Growes shamelesse bold, and boldly impudent.

And as a hoat and eagre dogge in hand,
VVhen he beholdes, his game before his eies.
Doth fawne, and leape, & licke, to loose his band,
But when he sees, him keeper surer ties,
Then feirce against him, hee begins to rise,
So they when fawning, could not win their wil,
Rayse like curst cures, and have a minde to kill.

For to the sad demaundantes, there they say,
Heere fownd we *Susan*, in adulterye,
Whose yongue companion, fled from hence away,
Bee fore we could, what wight he was descrie.
Beleeve vs (gentle friendes) we tell no lie.
For these our eies, are witnesses, we saw them.
And here's the place, to which thee did with draw the.

VVhich cursed sight, did so our eies offend,
(And much the more for noble *Ioachims* sake
Our honorable kinsman and good friend)
That we did do our best, the groome, to take:
That speedie death, (for wrong) a mendes might make.
But he for vs, to nimble at strong hand,
Fled by that dore, which yet doth open stand.

The

The constancie of Susanna.

The durious servitors with bashfull brow,
Blush now with sylent shame, at this her fact:
Who never (till that day) was thought to bow,
Vnto so base a sin, or vile an act.
Wherefore they did suspect, some plot compact,
And in her cause, would shape some sharp replie,
VVell armed in her right to giue the lie.

But when they saw, those elders of the land,
VVere vouchers of the fact, and filthie deed.
They darst not contradict them, or withstand.
And yet their inward partes, were touch'd with meed,
To thinke how ill (poore prif'ner) shee should speed,
When as the iudges mouth, (the witnesse breath)
Should verdict giue, that giues the doome of death.

And so sad men, greife laden home they go,
To prie what comfort, in their ladies looke.
And leaue these iudges, plotting of her woe.
VVho straight the way, vnto their howses tooke,
Where they their goodly being, badly brooke.
While cagre enuie, restless doth invent,
The overthrowe, of this chaste innocent.

O Enuie wayward witch, fowle hagge of hel,
Whie dost thou make men pine, at mens prosperitie?
O you fond fooles, that in her den do dwel,
And theare torment your selues, with her seueritie,
VVhole slaue is *slannder*, and her page *Temeritie*.
Whie wast you, restless seruice on a dame,
That restless witheth, vertues seruantes shame;

The constancie of Susanna.

Pale fretting furie, furious sorceresse,
Bel-dame to madnesse, and yoke mate to woe.
Thy mother pride, a mortal murtheresse,
Thy father *Plutus*, mans immortall foe.
Thy brattes blood, shedding hate, that hath no hoe,
Contention, striffe, debate, revendge, and slaunder,
VVhich vex the life, and after death do wander.

Thy guttes are gald, cholers boyling some,
Like *Aetnaes* wombe, that belkes sulphurous flames,
Thy cabbin carrin thoughtes, a hell thy home.
Thy habite like, those fierce *Tartarian* dames,
VVhose flesh consum'd, there resteth but the rames.
For while thou know'st not how, to hold a meane,
To eat thy neighbors farlings, makes thee leane.

Their hartes haue anguish, soules haue bitternesse.
VVhome thou dost learne, to laugh at vertues woe.
Thy path is blind, and pau'd with slippernesse.
They walke to hell, that in thy wayes do goe.
Yet are these elders thine, devoted so,
That liuing now, they liue but to deprive;
The life of her, they loath to see aliue;

The filthie toades, infect the fowntaines cleere.
Where others sucke, the venome that they leaue.
And serpentes spue, their poyson everie wheare;
VVhich yet them selues, do not of life bereaue.
But these false seniors, do themselves deccaue.
That spet soorth enuies, venome on this dame;
Yet kill them selues, by sucking in the same,

The constancie of Susanna.

For on the following day, of this disgrace;
The iudges with the people, make repaire,
To keepe thier vsuall courts, in wonted place.
In Iochims house (a spacious roome and faire)
VVhere feeble hope, vpholdeth faint dispaire.
VVhile their blud-thristie thoughts, do wholie long,
To do her fame, and body deadly wronge.

And mounted on, the pow'rfull seat of life;
They wil their summ'nors, to ascite and call,
Susann, (Helchias daughter, Iochims wife)
To make appearence there before them all.
And answer in an action criminall.
Thus they pretend with right, roote out euilles,
But whie should right be prophand in such diuelles,

And shee good lady, (loyall to the lawes)
(Armd with assurance, of her innocence,
And guarded with the goodnesse, of her cause.
In conscience brazen fortresse of defence)
Feignes none excuse, or shifiting flie pretence.
But doth obey the summions, and proceed.
And leaves to God th' event of her good speede.

And so attended, with a mourning traine,
Shee makes appearence, in the fatall place,
VVhere standers by, cannot from teeres refraine,
To see the gallant prisoners, wofull case.
Her peere, her-frendes, her parentes, children race,
Repleate the ayre with woes, and grownd with teeres,
VVhile heartes eclipse, in clouded eie appeeres.

VVhere

The constancie of Susanna.

And standing in a robe, of finest blacke,
(Deepe sorrowes signe, by, causlesse infamie)
There ouerspreades, her shoulders head and backe;
Availe of lawne, (to note integritie)
Which hid her whiter beautie, from the eie.
This shadow they commaund, to be removed.
That they at least might looke on what they loued;

Which when th' officious officers, had done,
Sweete beauties blush, did yeeld her, such a grace;
As when a clowd, is taken from the sonne.
VVhen sorrow suckes, the reds forth of her face,
The machlesse white, aloane doth hold the place.
But when the crymson humor, steines the white;
Corall seemes shadowed, in the Galacine.

Such is the beautie, that enchauntes their eies.
And charmes their heartes, through it so sore attaynted.
That they both God and goodnesse do despise.
And vvith nought else, but sin are novv acquainted.
O That shee should, with such faire shape be painted,
To make commaunders mindes, to lust obey.
And shee her selfe, exposed for their pray.

For when they had full gorg'd, their ravenous eies;
On beauties dainties, (with a short repast)
They two amid'st, the people do arise,
To giue their witness, gainst this constante chaste.
And as the law doth will, their handes they plast,
Vpon the head, of this pure innocent.
(Two woulves foule pawes, a seely lamb to rent)

G

Where

The constancie of Susanna

VVhere swearing by Gods name, a solemne oath,
To set aside, all partiall loue and hate,
And speake the truth, and nothing but the troth.
Periured iudges (foes to truthtes elate)
Vnto the people, thus they intymate.
This noble dame, that shewd a fant in sight,
Is fownd vnconstant, fickle, lewd, and light,

For yesterday, in *Ioachim*s orchard walkinge,
To recreate our spirites, with holesome ayre,
This dame with her two damselles, thither stallinge,
Thear did to her, an vnknowne youth repayre.
VVhose shape was comly, and his feature fayre.
But er he came in sight, that none detect it,
Her madens thee distrust least they suspect it.

VVhoe being gone, and dores ybarred fast,
VVee (shrowded from their sight) with wakefull heed
Perceu'd the wicked, to their sin make hast.
And creaping cloasly, with conuenient speed,
Wee did surprize them, in the shamfull deede.
And him we caught, but yet away he fled.
For him from vs, his strength deliuered.

But her we held, and thear examined,
VVhat youth he was, that did her bodie vse.
And though confessing shame did die herred,
Yet to resolute our doubt shee did refuse.
And with still sylence did her selfe accuse.
Thus haue we shewd the fact, of this lewd wife.
For which misdeed, law biddes her lose her life.

Shes

The constancie of Susanna

Shee all this space, with patience on her knee,
VVith handes and eies, vp-reared to the skie,
Commends her cause to God, which all doth see;
VVhile groaning spirite, in anguish plundgd doth crye,
Help, help, me God, or else in shame I die.
Thou rul'st right, then stretch thine arme so strong,
And overrule the rulers of this wrong.

While thus shee doth appeale vnto the highest;
Her burning zeale doth plead her innocence,
Her modest looke, doth say, false iudge thou liest.
Her bashfull sylence, speakes in her defence
Her good reporte, reproves their ill pretence
The streames of teares, that on her cheekes as spilt,
By secreat verdict, quittes her from the guilt,

Yet much amaz'd, to here this diuell speake,
(For well shee wist no manlike mind he bore)
Shee shapen him answere, else her heart would breake.
Although her tormentes, should be much the more,
Shee saw pale death attending at the dore.
To take her thence, if that shee held her peace.
And if shee speake, shee could not death increase,

VVherefore ev'n as a man, thats sencelesse stroken;
VVhen as he comes, vnto himselfe againe,
And feelles his bodie, wonnded, bruf'd, or broken,
By swarting cause, cannot from wrath refraine,
But letteech flie; his irefull blowes amaine.
Ev'n so her conscience, netled by dispiht.
Fights with fierce words, weake champions of her right.

The constancie of Susanna.

O admirable patience (sayth shee)
And depth interachable of Gods intent,
Whether this happe for tryall vnto me,
Or for these helhownds, greater punnishment,
Hee onely knowes, which onely hath it sent.

VVhie doth he not, with righteous hand repress,
This scum of sin and filth of filthinesse?

VVhie did not wombe, before these babes did sprawle,
Abhorre such seede, vnworthie for the brests.

VVhie entred life, within such bitter gaule?

VVhie harbour soules, within such filthy nestes?

Whie did the ayre, giue breathing to such beastes?

Whie did the heav'nes, permit so fowle an eie,
For to behould, the pure vnspotted skie?

Whie did not nature, mould deformed clay,
So fowle mishapen mindes, for to ingirth?

Whie swell not floudes, and swiftly sweepe away,
This seede of *Cam*, from the polluted earth?

Whie did not hell, deuoure them in the birth?

VVhie do not angrie elementes, conspire,
To powre vppon them, hoat consuming fire?

Whie did the earth, eate *Corach* and his crewe,
And suffer these to trample on her browe?

VVhie did wilde beares, those idoll ympes subdue,
And do wilde beastes, these beastes to liue allowe?

Whie do not thunderboltes, enforce them bow?

What should I say? whie doth not God in ruth,
Commaund each power, to punnish theirs vntruth?

But

The constancie of Susanna.

But thou O Lord, art free from this offence,
VVhen rav'ning woules such feely lambes deuower,
Thou righteous, dost not punish innocence.
Tis not thy worke, tis they abuse thy power,
Thy power is iust, the imperfection our.
The aire is good, that doth the voice dispence,
Though faultly vnde, to giue false euidence.

Then iudges (most vniust) behold the skies,
Thinke thear's a God, those glorious globes that guide:
Let not despaire, your soules deere health dispise,
But haue regard, what law you goe besides,
Perpend in deepest thought God not abides,
Such wrathfull *Cams*, as vvaist the guiltlesse blood,
Then haue respect to me, for your owne good.

Perchance you thinke, your sinnes so farre exceede,
That God is neuer able, to forgieue.
O flie those thoughtes, which swift destruction breede,
And that our God, is mercifull belieue.
Doe not so willingly, to darke hell diue.
But these your haynous deedes, from heart repent,
And God will then, remit sinnes punishment.

Let not fowle sin, be seeded in your age,
Let not your vertues die, before they spring.
Doe not commit on me, so great outrage,
But let true iustice rule, in ev'rie thing,
Consider what defame, such wrong will bring.
VVhat doe you thinke, God sees not what you doe?
Yes sure he doth, then haue respect thereto.

The constancie of Susanna.

Your conscience can controule, your heartes of follie;
Your hearts can say, your tongues doe falshood tell,
Your tongues can tell, your action is vnholie,
To wrong a seely woman; meaning vuell,
And hating this offence, as hatefull hell.
Let pittie raise remorse, and banish wronge,
Be not to stout, because you are to strong.

But if your heartes blood-hardned still remaine,
To shed her blood, that hath no lawes offended.
Then worke your wils on me, (O sonnes of *Am*)
VVould God in this good cause, my life were ended,
So that your liues, and manners were amended.
VVhich if you doe not right, with speedy pace,
Mine honors wrong, your honors will deface.

A tree but young, one may both bow and bend;
VVhen as the old, will hardly bend at all,
A whelp with trickes, is taught to fetch and send,
VVhen as old dogges, to it you hardly hall,
VVho can reclaime, wilde haggards to the call?
Even so these men that sealed are in sin,
To serue the Lord cannot tell how begin,

For when they heard, this oratresses tale,
VVith constant speech, and gesture so declaimed,
Fierce enuies fretting poyson, made them pale,
Fearing to misse the marke, whereat they aimed,
They doe inferre it falshood, meere feigned.
To frustrate iustice, with a flie perswasion,
And from deserved death, to make evasion,

The constancie of Susanna.

No credit giue (say they) this cunning dame,
Which with lip-lavish wordes, would shift her death.
A man huge myriades of vntruthes, would frame.
If he by them, could buy life, feeding breath.
Is it not a iudges word, that witnesseth?
Is not our oath confirmed vwith our hand?
VVhat two doe vvitness, law doth will to stand.

VVhich said, they do proceede to doome of death,
(By processe had from the imperall state)
And one the dolefull sentence, vttereth;
Shee should be led, forth of the citie gate,
And there (as *Moses* doth the law relate)
The multitude (a fickle wavering head)
Should presse her downe, with stones til she were dead.

Thus doth the law, by witness wrestled deale,
Thus is the vertuous dame condemn'd to die,
The iudge reiectes, the husbandes graue appeale,
He stops his eares, at parentes sad reply.
He will not heere, the infants wofull cry.
(No doubt a pafe that godly land doth flourish,
VVhich doth such lust-affected iudges nourish.)

But loath to be interred in shames nest,
Stab'd with heart-wounding wordes, falles on her knee,
Shee wakes her thoughtes, with thumping on her brest,
Flies to her last refuge, to set her free.
Entreates her God, with humble teeres that hee.
VVould not for sake, or leaue her in distresse,
But send his comfort, to her comfortlesse.

The constancie of Saffiana.

O righteous God, my iudge (saith shee)
VVhich see'st the secret heart,
And dost inflict, revenge on those,
That doe thy lawes subvert.

Repreſſe the pride of tyrants ſtout,
VVhich doe my life aſſaile.
Heere now and helpe, thy handmaide helpe,
For helpe of man doth faile.

Do not expoſe me for their pray,
Because they doe not right,
But hunt in heart to bring about,
That's hatefull in thy ſight,

And of a meere malicious minde,
False witneſſe heere haue brought,
And cauſleſſe laid vnto my chardge,
The things I never thought.

Thou ſeeſt (my God) vvhat they haue done,
Thou ſeeſt their envious heart.
Thou knowſt they ſought to lawleſſe luſt,
Thine hand-maide to convert,

Thou knowſt, I dread not daring death,
Ne force his might a pin.
No, no, I doe deſire, to die,
A better life to win.

It en-

An introduction to the ſtory.

It tender not faire beauties traſh,
It tender my good name,
Leaſt leeſing life, I be by death,
Entombed in deſame.

For this cauſe riſe (O Lord) make haſt,
Repell my ſoules deſpight.
And ſhew the nations, farre and neere,
How much thou tendreſt right.

I know my finnes are paſſing great,
VVhich acted are each hower.
Yet let my teeres thy mercy treat,
And ſhield me with thy power.

If no (deſamed wretch) I die,
For keeping of thy law,
And cauſleſſe thou ſhalt ſeeme (my God)
Thy comfort to withdraw.

Haſt then O Lord, make haſt I ſay,
Leaſt guiltleſſe blood be ſpilt.
Yet not my will be done in this,
But be it as thou vvilt.

VVhen ſhee her godly, orayſons had ended,
And that no meanes was left, to make delay.
The fawning officers, in court attended,
VVith prophane handes, to hale her thence away,
And though ſhee were as readie to obey,
Yet ſtill this ſoare, doth ſmart in guiltleſſe minde,
That ſhee ſhould leaue, an ill report behinde.

When

The constancie of Susanna.

Are you such sots, O seede of Israel?
Are you so blind, you see not what you do?
Are you so deafe you heere not what they tel?
Know you not right, and what bee longes thearto.
Survey you not, your steppes before you goe?
Whiche haueyov heere, condemnd this dame to dies
And would not heere her iust appeale and crie?

O turne with speed, turne to the iudgment seate.
And then behould, what God will thear relate.
Your seviers sinnes, haue growne exceeding greate,
Repelled lust, ingendring with foule hate,
In them the bastard periurie, begate.
Bold periurie did breed false witnesse bearing,
False witnesse wrestled iudgmente, by for-sweearing.

At which his wordes, the people yonge and olde
Do make a stand and backwardes thence retire.
Whear daunting sins, the seniours heartes make cold.
While daunger woundes, the depth of their desire.
Yet past shams bowndes, their shamlesse thoughts aspire
And forth they passe, into the sessions hall,
And hide in crabbed brow, their conscience gaul.

The elders of this circumfized race,
(Which with reprimed pris'nour turne a ge'n)
When ev'rie one, had ta'ne his visuall place,
They say vnto this stately stripling then,
Use thou the roome, of these malicious men.
Declare to vs, Gods iudgmente and decree.
Sith God hath giv'n, an elders spirit to thee.

Then

The constancie of Susanna.

Then Daniell tooke, the powerfull place of life.
And thear to intimate, Gods will to all:
Where are (quoth he) the wrongers of this wife?
Put them a parte, out of each others call,
And bring forth one (by one) in to the hall.
So you shall see, their traytrouse tonges reveale,
What wicked heartes, do cover and conceale.

The formall officers, performe his mind.
And brought forth one, to be examined.
Who lookd like murthrous marked Cain, ynkind,
When brothers blood, he guiltlesely had shed.
His colour shew'd, what harbord in his head.
His ioyntes (as if vnioynted) were at iarre.
False iudge (now pris'ner) pleading at the barre.

And standing thus, before the balefull bench,
The beardlesse iudge (to checke him yncontrold
That conscience as a cooling carde, might quench,
The heate of his bravado overbold)
Saith, thou sin seafned wretch, that waxest olde
In sin thy wicked life is come to light.
Whose falshood harmed, manie a harmlesse wight?

Thou hast abus'd thy life, God lent to thee,
To mend thy life, and passed sins repent.
For nothing but oppressions, he could see.
Therefore he will, thie glorie from thee rent.
Which hast condemn'd, to death an innocent,
And let the guiltie, goe for giftes a way.
VWhile lust and bribes, did blind thee day by day.

Sith

The constancie of Susanna.

Sith sworne thou hast, (eie witnesse) thou didst see,
This comely dame, with her companion sin;
Report the truth; and name to vs the tree,
That hid the fact, you did surprise them in.
Pause not but speake, (if wordes shall creadit win)
Be briefe, let not oblivion beare the blor,
Things dont so late, are not so soone forgot.

Then pawling twixt despaire, and tyred hope,
(As one that had no constant yea, nor nay)
VVould faine intreate, some longer time and scope,
But that he findes impatience in delay,
VVhile to himselfe he saies; shall I obey?
Confesse my fault wherein I haue offended,
And pardon craue that all may be amended?

No, no, my heart shall never stoope so low,
To bow to those, that vsde to bend to me.
I am not sure, what favour such will shew,
Wherefore I wil devise, some kinde of tree,
VVhose branching bowghes, might shrowd adulterie.
Thus reasons he (a bird of *Balam*s brood)
That will not be reclaim'd, to any good.

At last he gapes for breath yet doubtles to speake,
(Because his partners doubtles he doth not know)
Yet through his teeth, this tragique tale doth breake,
(VVhile foaming furie makes him puffle and blow)
Saith he in *Ioachims* orchard, there doth grow,
A *Masticke* tree, whose branches clowd the sonne,
In whose darke shade, the brothels act was done.

VVhen

The constancie of Susanna.

VVhen *Daniell* heard, this vncomposed speach,
False are (quoth he) the wordes thou dost report.
Thy lying lippes, thee partiall doe appeach,
Gods minde to me reavealed; doth exhort,
Thy sinfull bodie, from thy soule to sort.
As one (deserving endlesse death to die)
That darst, gainst God, and conscience sweare a lie.

VVhen this was acted, him they lead away,
And bring his brother forth, in open place.
In whose fell heart (fowle cabbm) envie lay,
Her wilde and staring looke, fate in his face,
(A wrinkled browv, a pale, and megre grace.
Did murder, mischiefe, mallice fierce, resemble)
While conscience cold, doth cause him quake & treble.

To whom younge *Daniell* saith in zealous mood;
O seed of cursed *Cham*, ympe of dispiht.
In vaine thy vaunt, doth boast of *Iuda* blood,
VVhen as thou art, in life a *Cananite*,
True nobles should, in noble actes delight.
But thou bewitch'd vvith beautie, weart beguiled;
When thy misleading lust, thine heart defiled,

Thus haue you past, your passed liues ill-spent,
Since first your wanton heartes, did traine you in,
To draw the dames of *Israel*, to your bent.
Whom you with feare did force, and flattery win,
To ioine with you, in acting secreat sinne.
But this chaste *Iewish* heere, of *Iuda* race,
Resisted hath, your follie to your face.

Now

The constancie of Susanna.

Now sith thy tongue, hath refused an act:
VVhich fame did not repute but eie did vewe
And thou death worst hie, deemed hast the fact.
Dissemble not be still a witness true.
Tell vs what tree, and in what place it grew,
VVhose shamelesse shad, did throwd this shamefull sin.
Pause ere thou speake, yet speake, and soone begin.

Hee grauiel now in greife, and grinn dispaire
(Like bowged barge, that sinkes in swallowing sandes)
Gapes ere he speaks, as if he wanted ayre.
VVhich oft with closed lippes, he countermaundes.
At length (saith he) in *Ioachims* orchard standes,
Neere fowntain faire, a greene thicke braunching *Holly*,
Vnder whose shad, these wicked wrought their folly.

Quoth *Daniel* then, your tongues haue yon betrayd.
Your forged lie, shall light vppon your pates.
Your wicked heartes, your wordes haue heere bewrayd.
The sword of *Iustice* (that iniustice hates)
Is readie heere, to slay you (sinfull mates)
Provide therefore a treble death to die,
Of bodie, soule, and lasting infamie.

For as you boath, haue causlesse sought to spill,
The guiltlesse blood, of this chaste *Israele*,
By witness false, therfore doth *Moses* will,
Your blood be shed; and we will doe you right,
Sith that your tongues, death-worthy you indite.
You shall be led, where shee should leese her breath,
And there with stones, your selues be done to death.

Which

The constancie of Susanna.

Which doome did much delight, the standers by.
VVith greate applause, the people do reioyce.
They clap their handes, and fling their cappes on hie.
The roofer reflects, the *Eccho* of their voyce.
VVhile thankfull heartes, their eyes to heav'n vphoice,
And tongues pronounce, *Our God be praised euer*,
VVhich helpeth his and doth for sake them neuer.

These iudges thus disgraced, from their states.
The multitude with readinesse, doth ronne,
To doe that doome, on these condemned mates,
They to acquitted *Susan*, would haue donne.
VVhile zeale would act, what wrong had ill beegonne.
Thus carelesse commons, right or wrong support.
When they are swayd, as soveraignes do exhort.

For as in man, when vapours vex the braines,
The giddie head, doth feele a whirling fit.
So fickle heads, to feed superiours vaines,
(When as affection, holdes the seate of wit)
Sway to and fro, as ruling vapours flit.
If they say yea, an yea doth answere stand,
If they say no, a no is prest at hand.

And yet (sometimes though sotted with content
That everie act doth seeme, to breed their ease)
Some whiles (when wayward vapors gets a vent)
A toy (the least occasion doth displease)
VVhile thoughtes do eb, and flow like surging seas.
For who so deales, with multitudes he findes,
In manie heades, a multitude of mindes.

VVhile

The constancie of Susanna.

While heartes do harbour, heapes of homely toys;
And heades ar fraught, with *Chaos* of conceiptes,
There coms continuall trade, of chaunging ioyes.
Which barter novelties, for elder feates.
As chaunging time, doth offer choice of cheates,
So those which yesterday, wrought wrong with might,
Are buſied now, in acting of the right.

For now with hast they hal them from the barre,
Whome late before, they heaved to the bench.
No treatie could, a day their death deferre.
While teeres the peoples furie, could not quench.
Which drue them forth, vnto the farall trench.
And (piniond) bownd them to the stubborne stake,
Where they their wel-deserved death should take.

Who living now forlorne (past liſſes repaire)
Haue not the heart, Gods mercie to intreate,
But rather ſeeke with *Saul* in deepe diſpaire,
VVith bluddie murthering handes, life to deſeate.
VVhile gainſt the ſtake their handes they bawle and beat.
And mind in vaine, their dreame their fall their height.
VVho wanted grace, to take Gods warning sight.

The pitying people pray, God turne their hartes,
But when they ſee, repentance place had none,
To yeeld thoſe reprobates, their due deſertes,
The happieſt man, doth hurle the hevielt ſtone.
To make them giue, the laſt life-yeelding groane.
VVhich done they part and leave the dead their room;
And lawd the lord, and *Daniel* for his doome.

VVhome

The constancie of Susanna.

VVhome God had made, ſelecteſt inſtrument,
To overthrow theſe wicked and vniuſt.
And ſaue the blood, of this chaſt innocent.
That with ſtoute *Conſtancie* reſiſted luſt,
And did not in diſtreſſe, deſrauld her truſt.
But ſaw her teeres, and heard her planting voyce,
VVhich made the hearts of thoſe ſandes to reioyce.

Amongſt the reſt (whoſe heartes ſweet comfort cheeres)
Helchia happie man, and his compeere,
(which erſt did weepe for woe) ſhed ioyfull teeres.
VVhen *Ioachim* ſoy, had paſt this plunging ſeere,
And kinſfolkes clowded eie, ſhone bright and cleere.
All with ſweete noates conſent, in *Suſans* name,
Praise God, that had preſerv'd her from deſame.

But cheiſſly ſhee (like lark on mounting winges)
VVhile inward zeale, breakes out in open ſight,
Tryumphing in her tunes, moſt ſweetely ſinges,
The prayſe of God, his mercie, and his might,
That did relive her wretch and wronged wight.
And iuſtly iudge her foes, the death to die.
That would entombe her fame, in infamie

Yea while her ſilent heart, doth thankes record,
Her reſtleſſe notes, do reach beyond the ſkie.
VVhoſe endleſſe ioy, was in her gracious Lord.
To him in hymnes, and tuned pſalmodie.
(VVhich did tranſmute her ſonnes to melodie)
ſhee giues the glorie of her victories,
As *David* when he ſoyld his enemies.

The constancie of Susanna.

The mighty Lord (saith shee)
Is my defence and might,
My king, my guide, my God;
My champion, for to fight;

The combate of my truth and conscience tiall.

He is my Anchor-hold,
My refuge, rest, and port,
My horne of saving health,
and eke my strongest fort.

Gainst whose comand, there standeth no denial.

VWhen over-flowing floodes,
Of raging fierce despight,
And great commaund, of Lordes
And men of power and might,

With dreadful threats of death, did make me quie
I did implore his aide, (ver.

In deepenesse of distresse.
VWho heard my iust complaint,
And wrought my due redresse.

He sent me aide, and did my soule deliver,

On him therefore I will,
In danger crie and call.

VWho can both heere and helpe,
(He heeres and helpeth all)

He (none but he) is worthie to be praised.

Deathes swallowing sorrowes hem'd,
Me round on ev'rie side,

VWith renting paines of hel,
In dangerto haue dide.

But he my life, from ravening graue hath raised,

The constancie of Susanna.

He from my strongest foes,
Hath set me captiue free.
Because he had alone,
And favour vnto me.

Who cunningly they sought to haue prevented.

But while he held me vp,
I could not swaie nor swarue.
They sought in vaine to spill,
The thing he did preserve.

And so to late (their labour lost) repented.

By him I made escape;
From handes of Tyrantes stout,
His power did put them downe,
And helpe his hand-maide out.

That power also, will strongly keep them vnder.

He trampleth with his feete,
Bold traitours that rebell.
He makes their hurefull tongues,
Their owne destruction tell.

Thus for his saintes, he acteth workes of wonder.

VWhose workes are all diuine,
VWhose mercies manifold.
His waies past finding out,
his word as finest gold.

His iudgement iust, his providence vnspotted.

O let thine arme O Lord,
My feeble hand susteine.
O let thy holy sp'rite,
VWithin my heart remaine,

O let thy loue be still to me allotted.

The constancie of Saffiana.

I looke with wakefull eies,
Vnto thine holy lawes.
Thy statutes are my staffe,
And stay in eu'ry cause.
To doe thy will, my will I finde affected,
That which I see is ill,
And hatefull in thy sight,
That doe I seeke to shun,
And flie with maine and might,
Least that my soule, by sin should be infected,

Thou art a living God,
Oblest be thou my king.
VWhich hast thy servant freed,
From tempting *Sathans* sting.
And reard my fame on high (by wicked wróged)
And hast confounded them,
That sought my greatest ill,
By working of my heart,
Vnto a wicked will.
To act such lewd designes, as lust had longed.

They fought to end my life,
And gaue me doome to die.
Because my holy faith,
I would not falsifie. (listd.
Pretending right, they worke what wrong them.
They vsed power to put,
Integritie to shame.
And ment an innocent,
To burie in defame. (sted.
Hadst thou not (Lord) their iudgement false reli,

Thus

The constancie of Saffiana.

Thus hast thou bin (my God)
Most mercifull to me.
Nor wanne by my desert,
But of thy mercie free.
My workes (I know) deserue to be reiected,
But thy kinde promise made,
To helpe the godlie hartes,
Doth binde thee more then all,
Our deedes or good desertes,
To keepe, protect, and saue, thy saintes elected.

Therefore I will sowne forth,
Thy praise to eu'ry care.
And shew thine endlesse power,
To nations farre and nere,
To *Sathans* and his kingdomes, great confusion.
I haue bin, am, and will
Remaine thine handmaide still.
Mine heart, my thoughtes, mine eies,
Shall waite vpon thy will.
This is my vow, and setled resolution.

Thus did shee spend, her following time of life,
In heauens contemplation, and delight.
And liued long, a ioyous happie wife,
Of passing cariage, and a worthie wight,
A foe to frawd, and fastest friend to right.
VWho living in the world, no worldling was,
But prest to bring a world of good to passe.

The constancie of Susanna

And as a bird, escaped from the gins;
Thinks ev'ry bended twigge, to be a trappe;
So shee, that dangerously, had snared bin,
(VVith true remembrance of her former hap)
Surveies her steps, to shunne each afterclap.
And feares to giue a fawninge eie good grace,
In old, or young, in noble, or in base.

At length when age, had plotted lifes decay;
And sicknesse wrought, in weakenesse more and more;
And that shee thought, death had no long delay.
Shee cald her children, taught in godlie lore;
And did bestow these precepts kept in store.

VWho come in place, with dutious loving hearts)
Shee thus to them, her carefull minde impartes,

Deare children cease, with sad lamenting griefe,
And malancholicke moanes, to waile my state.
Your sobbing hearts doe yeeld me no reliefe,
But vexing torments in my heart innate.
Leaue then, for plaintes and teares are not in date.
No, no, if they could life in body hold;
VVeaye would weepe, we would buy teares for gold.

But vaine it is to kicke against a pricke;
And sinne to take Gods scourge impatiently.
My debt to death, to pay I must not sticke,
For why, you know that all are borne to die,
Then must I yeeld, forther no remedie;
And pay my due that I to nature owe,
For time requires, and Gbd will haue it so.

The

The constancie of Susanna

The strongest Lyon, stoopes to conquering death,
The aged oake, at length doth change his hue.
In time the long liv'd *Phoenix*, leeseeth breath,
Thrice aged *Enoch*, yeeldes to natures due.
Sith then tis so, and what I saie is true.
And time doth trie that all things must decaie,
Then sure I know, I haue not long to staie.

Therefore marke well, the counsaile that I giue,
Revolue it in your mindes (my children deere)
For it shall most prevaile (if that you liue)
VVhen friends and worldly goods you haue not heere;
First worship God, and to his lawes giue care.
Set him your load-starre, and your lampe of light,
His lawes the line to lead your liues aright,

Vse diligence, in doing of your duties,
To thole superiours (rulers over you)
Doe good to all, bend thereto all your studies.
Sing not the *Syrens* song, that proues vntrue,
Though trothlesse *Absalon*, be faire in view,
VVith *Jonathan*, doe faithfull still remaine,
Shun *Ismaels* bloudie teares, and subtile braine.

Plaie not the cowards in your countries good,
Spend in her cause, your dearest breath and wealth.
And though prosperitie hath you withstood,
And frowning world denies gal-sugred pelfe,
Be not dismaide, esteeme your heav'nlie health.
For that shall yeeld you comfort in distresse,
VVhen world and friends, haue left you comfortlesse.

Flie

The constancie of Susanna.

Flie still aspiring mindes, yet seeke renowne,
VVin it by vertue, and by manly might,
Franke not rebellious flesh, but keepe it downe.
Like not those painted dames that doe delight,
Lyllies are fowle in smell, though faire in sight. (moantes,
And though they pice with baites, with teeres, with
Yet minde, that painted romber, haue rotten bones.

My sonnes if you must liue, in wedlocke bandes,
Loue for vertue, and like the modest chaste.
Set neither fading beaurty, goods nor landes;
Before that hue, that in the heart is plait.
Be neuer prodigall, your goods to wast..

Learne with the busie ant, the way to liue,
Spare not to much, but doe by sparing thriue.

If you vvith childrens store, be blest of God,
His richest giftes account that pretie crew.
Enstruēt and bring them vp, to feare the rod,
VVith those precepts your parents taught to you,
Though all things want, let them not want this due.
For sure (my sonnes) it is not faide for naught,
Better vnborne, then borne to liue vntaught.

Esteeme the wavering world as it is,
VVhere swiftest time, brings all things to decay.
Esteeme your selues, heere voide of ioies and blisse,
And thinke each morrow, is your ending day,
Desire of God on earth not long to stay.
VVhere nought but sin, & grieve doth reigne (behold)
And nought is got, but sinne in waxing old.

The

The constancie of Susanna.

The little babe once comming to the birth,
Is borne as bare, and naked as my nail.
The puling wretch his wofull state on earth,
VVith tongue, and teeres, new born doth weep and waile.
To see his soule shut vp, in sinful gaile,
And swaddled lims, fast fettered round aboute.
Like captiue wretch, that no way findeth out,

His childish actions all, vnperfect are,
To sit, to eate, to speake, to stand, to goe,
The childe is taught and nursed vp with care,
And pampred eke with paine, and wakefull woe,
He proues the pikes, of manie a pangue also.
VVith furious foes, he hath continuall warre,
His flesh this world and raging fiend they are.

His life is like, the raging seas recoile,
His choyest things, are in event but vaine,
His wealth is want, his rest is restless toile,
His health mishap, and all his pleasures paine,
His chiefe companions linked in one chaine.
Are hopelesse hope, deepe danger, care and feare,
VVhile dying life, doth dailie dread the beare.

He often times (beset with deepe distresse)
Doth call for death, before his dying daie.
And dead man like, by sleeping in excessse,
Doth spend the halfe, of precious time away,
The rest mispent in idlenesse or play.
Or spent to serue our owne occasions so,
As least we care, when God haue part or noe.

Thus

The constancie of Susanna.

Thus man is made, the pray and spoyle of time,
A ripe of miserie and mishap (God woat)
A sinke of sinfull sin, an heap of crime,
A ship that still on billowing waues doth float
When age comes on, then all his fences doat.
He waxeth deafe, his eies with dazing dimme,
His teeth corrupt, he hath no lively limme.

Can such a dying man, be sayd to liue?
What kind of life? what living call you this?
No life but death, a shade that life doth giue,
For perfect life, by death obtained is.
Whie then do mortall worldlinges go amisse?
Whie love they life whie do they death detest?
Which sets them free from ill, and bringeth rest?

Hence learne (poore heartes) your life vncertaine is,
Still heaps of harmes, are hovering on your head.
Keepe these my wordes, and feare to do amisse.
More would I say, but life is partly fled.
Whome death (with feely tryumph) doth downe tred;
Fare well (sweete ioyes) sometimes my heartes delight
The grownd my corpes, to God I yeeld my spirite

Epi.

Epilogus.

Thus heere you see, how God preserveth his
And those that do them iniurize, confowndeth,
Hence may you learne, what t'is to live amisse,
What failes to him, that with prowd sin abowndeth,
That hee which stedfast hope, in Gods helpe growndeth
Gainst him not hell, nor hel houndes shall preveile,
For God will help, when help of man doth faile,

FINIS.

Faultes escaped.

*In fol. 4. Page 1 make content malecontent, 5. 1. surely surely, 15. 1. malden birch, maiden
earib, 15. 2. married wife, married wife, 18. 1. my, myne, 23. 1. faice faire, 23. 2. thus this, 30. 2.
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